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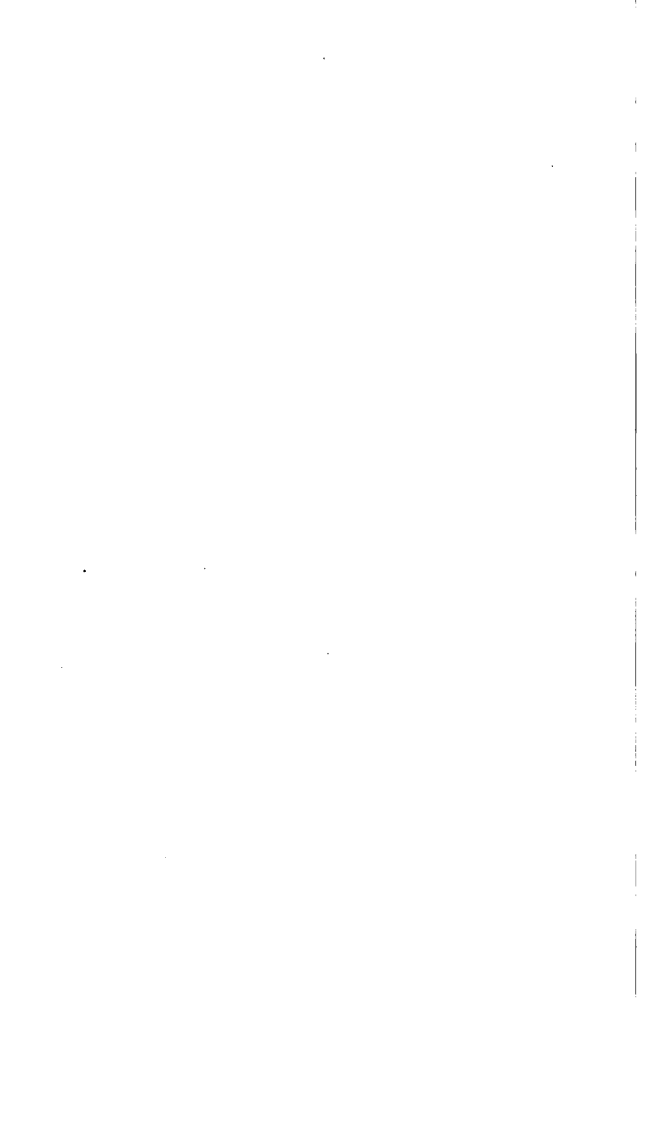
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# AFFECTING SCENES;

BEING

PASSAGES

FROM THE

DIARY OF A PHYSICIAN.

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NEW AND COMPLETE EDITION.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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Weyman K. Flint

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**OF**  
**THE SECOND VOLUME.**

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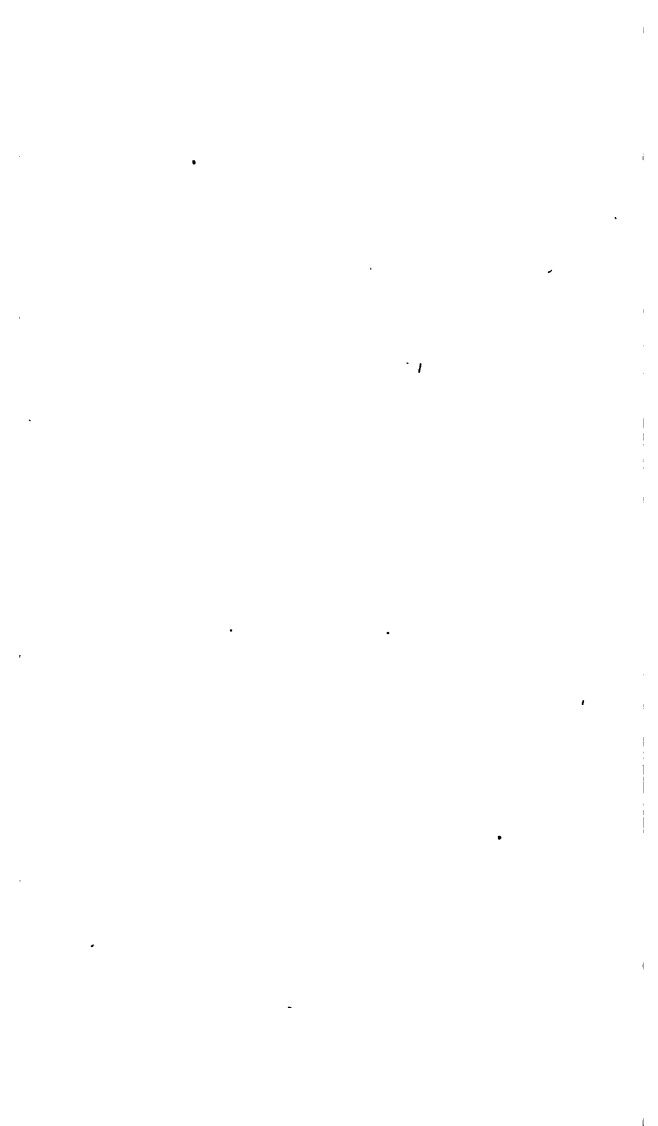
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**AFFECTING SCENES;**  
**BEING**  
**PASSAGES FROM THE DIARY**  
**OF**  
**A PHYSICIAN.**



# PASSAGES

## FROM THE

### DIARY OF A LATE PHYSICIAN.

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#### . CHAPTER I.

##### THE STATESMAN.

AMBITION!—Its sweets and bitters—its splendid miseries—its writhling cares—its wasting agonies—its triumphs and downfalls—who has not, in some degree, known and felt them? Moralists, historians, and novelists have filled libraries in picturing their dreary and dazzling details; and yet Ambition's votaries, or rather victims, are as numerous, as enthusiastic as ever!—Such is the mounting quality existing in almost every one's breast, that no "Pelion upon Ossa" heapings, and accumulations of facts and lessons, can keep it down. Though I fully feel the truth of this remark, vain and futile though the attempt may prove, I cannot resist the inclination to contribute my mite towards the vast memorials of Ambition's martyrs!

My specific purpose, in first making the notes from which the ensuing narrative is taken, and in now presenting it to the public—in thus pointing to the spectacle of a sun suddenly and disastrously eclipsed while blazing at its zenith—is this: To show the steps by which a really great mind—an eager and impetuous spirit—was voluntarily sacrificed at the shrine of political ambition; foregoing, nay, de-



spising, the substantial joys and comforts of elegant privacy, and persisting, even to destruction, in its frantic efforts to bear up against and grapple with cares too mighty for the mind of man. It is a solemn lesson, imprinted on my memory in great and glaring characters; and if I do but succeed in bringing a few of them before the reader, they may at least serve to check extravagant expectations, by disclosing the misery which often lies cankering behind the most splendid popularity. If I should be found inaccurate in my use of political technicalities and allusions, the reader will be pleased to overlook it, on the score of my profession.

I recollect, when I was at Cambridge, overhearing some men of my college talk about the "splendid talents of young Stafford,"\* who had lately become a member of — hall; and they said so much about the "great hit" he had made in his recent debut at one of the debating societies—which then flourished in considerable numbers—that I resolved to take the earliest opportunity of going to hear and judge for myself. That was soon afforded me. Though not a member of the society, I gained admission through a friend. The room was crammed to the very door; and I was not long in discovering the "star of the evening" in the person of a young fellow-commoner, of careless and even slovenly appearance. The first glimpse of his features disposed me to believe all I had heard in his favour. There was no sitting for *effect*; nothing artificial about his demeanour—no careful carelessness of attitude—no knitting of the brows, or painful straining of the eyes, to look brilliant or acute! The mere absence of all these little conceits and fooleries, so often disfiguring "talented young speakers," went, in my estimation, to the account of his superiority. His face was "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," and its lineaments

\* It can hardly be necessary, I presume, to reiterate, that whatever names individuals are indicated by in these papers, are fictitious.

very deeply and strongly marked. There was a wondrous power and fire in the eyes, which gleamed with restless energy whichever way he looked. They were neither large nor prominent—but all soul—all expression. It was startling to find their glance suddenly settled on one. His forehead, as much as I saw of it, was knotted and expansive. There was a prevailing air of anxiety about his worn features— young as he was, about 21—as if his mind was every instant hard at work, which an inaccurate observer might have set down to the score of ill-nature, especially when coupled with the matter-of-fact unsmiling nods of recognition with which he returned the polite inclinations of those who passed him. To me, sitting watching him, it seemed as though his mind were of too intense and energetic a character to have any sympathies with the small matters transpiring around him. I knew his demeanour was simple, unaffected, genuine, and it was refreshing to see it. It predisposed me to like him, if only for being free from the ridiculous airs assumed by some with whom I associated. He allowed five or six speakers to address the society, without making notes, or joining in the noisy exclamations and interruptions of those around him. At length he rose amid perfect silence—the silence of expectant criticism whetted by rivalry. He seemed at first a little flustered, and for about five minutes spoke hesitatingly and somewhat unconnectedly—with the air of a man who does not know exactly how to *get at* his subject, which yet he is conscious of having thoroughly mastered. At length, however, the current ran smooth, and gradually widened and swelled into such a stream—a torrent of real eloquence—as I never before or since heard poured from the lips of a young speaker—or possibly any speaker whatsoever, except himself in after-life. He seemed long disinclined to enhance the effect of what he was uttering by oratorical gesture. His hands both grasped his cap, which ere

long was compressed, twisted, and crushed out of all shape; but as he warmed, he laid it down, and used his arms, the levers of eloquence, with the grace and energy of a natural orator. The effect he produced was prodigious. We were all carried away with him, as if by whirlwind force. As for myself, I felt for the first time convinced that oratory such as that could persuade me to any thing. As might have been expected, his speech was fraught with the faults incident to youth and inexperience, and was pervaded with a glaring hue of extravagance and exaggeration. Some of his "facts" were preposterously incorrect, and his inferences false; but there was such a prodigious power of language—such a blaze of fancy—such a stretch and grasp of thought—and such casuistical dexterity evinced throughout, as indicated the presence of first-rate capabilities. He concluded amid a storm of applause; and before his enthusiastic auditors, whispering together their surprise and admiration, could observe his motions, he had slipped away and left the room.

The excitement into which this young man's "*first appearance*" had thrown me, kept me awake the greater part of the night; and I well recollect feeling a transient fit of disinclination for the dull and sombre profession of medicine, for which I was destined. That evening's display warranted my indulging large and high expectations of the future eminence of young Stafford; but I hardly went so far as to think of once seeing him secretary of state, and leader of the British House of Commons. Accident soon afterward introduced me to him, at the supper-table of a mutual friend. I found him distinguished as well by that simplicity and frankness ever attending the consciousness of real greatness, as by the recklessness, irritability, and impetuosity of one aware that he is far superior to those around him, and in possession of that species of talent which is appreciable by all—of those rare powers which ensure a

man the command over his fellows—keen and bitter sarcasm—and extraordinary readiness of repartee. Then, again, all his predilections were political. He utterly disregarded the popular pursuits at college. Whatever he said, read, or thought had reference to his “ruling passion,”—and that not by fits and starts, under the arbitrary impulses of rivalry or enthusiasm, but steadily and systematically. I knew from himself, that, before his twenty-third year, he had read over and made notes of the whole of the parliamentary debates, and have seen a table which he constructed for reference on a most admirable and useful plan. The minute accuracy of his acquaintance with the whole course of political affairs, obtained by such laborious methods as this, may be easily conceived. His powers of memory were remarkable—as well for their capacity as tenacity; and the presence of mind and judgment with which he availed himself of his acquisitions convinced his opponent that he had undertaken an arduous, if not hopeless, task, in rising to reply to him. It was impossible not to see, even in a few minutes’ interview with him, that AMBITION had “marked him for her own.” Alas, what a stormy career is before this young man!—I have often thought, while listening to his impassioned harangues and conversations, and witnessing the twin fires of intellect and passion flashing from his eyes. One large ingredient in his composition was a most morbid sensibility; and then he devoted himself to every pursuit with a headlong, undistinguishing enthusiasm and energy, which inspired me with lively apprehensions, lest he should wear himself out and fall by the way, before he could actually enter on the great arena of public life. His forehead was already furrowed with premature wrinkles!—His application was incessant. He rose every morning at five, and retired pretty regularly by eleven.

Our acquaintance gradually ripened into friendship, and we visited each other with mutual frequency and

cordiality. When he left college, he entreated me to accompany him to the Continent, but financial reasons forbade it. He was possessed of a tolerably ample fortune; and, at the time of quitting England, was actually in treaty with Sir ——— for a borough. I left Cambridge a few months after Mr. Stafford; and as we were mutually engaged with the arduous and absorbing duties of our respective professions, we saw and heard little or nothing of one another for several years. In the very depth of my distress—during the first four years of my establishment in London—I recollect once calling at the hotel which he generally made his town-quarters, for the purpose of soliciting his assistance in the way of introductions; when, to my anguish and mortification, I heard that on that very morning he had quitted the hotel for Calais, on his return to the Continent!

At length Mr. Stafford, who had long stood contemplating on the brink, dashed into the tempestuous waters of public life, and emerged—a member of parliament for the borough of ———. I happened to see the gazette which announced the event, about two years after the occurrence of the accident which elevated me into fortune. I did not then require any one's interference on my behalf, being content with the independent exercise of my profession; and even if I had been unfortunate, too long an interval had elapsed, I thought, to warrant my renewing a mere college acquaintance with such a man as Mr. Stafford. I was content, therefore, to keep barely within the extreme rays of this rising sun in the political hemisphere. I shall not easily forget the feelings of intense interest with which I saw, in one of the morning papers, the name of my *quondam* college friend, "MR. STAFFORD," standing at the head of a speech of two columns' length—or the delight with which I paused over the frequent interruptions of "*Hear, hear!*"—"Hear, hear, hear!"—"Cheers!"—"Loud cheers!"—which marked the speaker's

progress in the favour of the House. "We regret," said the reporter, in a note at the end, "that the noise in the gallery prevented our giving at greater length the eloquent and effective maiden-speech of Mr. Stafford, which was cheered perpetually throughout, and excited a strong sensation in the House." In my enthusiasm I purchased that copy of the newspaper, and have it now in my possession. It needed not the inquiries which every where met me, "Have you read Mr. Stafford's maiden-speech?" to convince me of his splendid prospects, the reward of his early and honourable toils. His "maiden-speech" formed the sole engrossing topic of conversation to my wife and me as we sat at supper that evening; and she was asking me some such question as is generally uppermost in ladies' minds on the mention of a popular character, "What sort of *looking* man he was when I saw him at Cambridge?"—when a forcible appeal to the knocker and bell, followed by the servant's announcing, that "A gentleman wished to speak to me directly," brought me into my patients' room. The candles, which were only just lit, did not enable me to see the person of my visiter very distinctly; but the instant he spoke to me, removing a handkerchief which he held to his mouth, I recognised—could it be possible?—the very Mr. Stafford we had been speaking of! I shook him affectionately by the hand, and should have proceeded to compliment him warmly on his last evening's success in the House, but that his dreadful paleness of features and discomposure of manner disconcerted me.

"My dear Mr. Stafford, what is the matter? Are you ill? Has any thing happened?" I inquired anxiously.

"Yes, doctor—perhaps fatally ill," he replied, with great agitation. "I thought I would call on you on my way from the House, which I have but just left. It is not *my* fault that we have not maintained our college acquaintance—but of that more hereafter.

I wish your advice—your honest opinion on my case. For God's sake, don't deceive me! Last evening I spoke for the first time in the House, at some length, and with all the energy I could command. You may guess the consequent exhaustion I have suffered during the whole of this day; and this evening, though much indisposed with fever and a cough, I imprudently went down to the House, when Sir —— so shamefully misrepresented certain portions of the speech I had delivered the preceding night, that I felt bound to rise and vindicate myself. I was betrayed into greater length and vehemence than I had anticipated; and on sitting down, was seized with such an irrepressible fit of coughing, as at last forced me to leave the House. Hoping it would abate, I walked for some time about the lobby—and at length thought it better to return home than re-enter the House. While hunting after my carriage, the violence of the cough subsided into a small, hacking, irritating one, accompanied with spitting. After driving about as far as Whitehall, the vivid glare of one of the street lamps happened to fall suddenly on my white pocket-handkerchief, and, oh God!" continued Mr. Stafford, almost gasping for breath, "this horrid sight met my eye!" He spread out a pocket-handkerchief all spotted and dabbled with blood! It was with the utmost difficulty that he communicated to me what is gone before.—"Oh! it's all over with me—the chapter's ended, I'm afraid!" he murmured, almost inarticulately—and while I was feeling his pulse he fainted. I placed him instantly in a recumbent position—loosened his neckerchief and shirt-collar—dashed some cold water in his face, and he presently recovered. He shook his head in silence, very mournfully—his features expressed utter hopelessness. I sat down close beside him, and, grasping his hand in mine, endeavoured to reassure him. The answers he returned to the few questions I asked him convinced

me that the spitting of blood was unattended with danger, provided he could be kept quiet in body and mind. There was not the slightest symptom of radical mischief in the lungs. A glance at his stout build of body, especially at his ample sonorous chest, forbade the supposition. I explained to him, with even professional minuteness of detail, the true nature of the accident—its effects—and method of cure. He listened to me with deep attention, and at last seemed convinced. He clasped his hands, exclaiming, "Thank God! thank God!" and entreated me to do on the spot what I had directed to be done by the apothecary—to bleed him. I complied, and from a large orifice took a considerable quantity of blood. I then accompanied him home—saw him consigned to bed—prescribed the usual lowering remedies—absolutely forbade him to open his lips, except in the slightest whisper possible—and left him calm, and restored to a tolerable measure of self-possession. One of the most exquisite sources of gratification arising from the discharge of our professional duties is the disabusing our patients of their harrowing and groundless apprehensions of danger. One such instance as is related above is to me an ample recompense for months of miscellaneous, and often thankless toil, in the exercise of my profession. Is it not, in a manner, plucking a patient from the very brink of the grave, to which he had despairingly consigned himself, and placing him once more in the busy throng of life—the very heart of society? I have seen men of the strongest intellect and nerve, whom the detection of a novel and startling symptom has terrified into giving themselves up for lost, in an instant dispossessed of their apprehensions, by explaining to them the real nature of what has alarmed them.\*

\* One instance presses so strongly on my recollection that I cannot help adverting to it:—I was one day summoned in haste to an eminent merchant in the city, who thought he had grounds for apprehending occasion for one of the most appalling operations known in surgery. When I arrived, on finding the case not exactly within my province, I



The alarm, however, occasioned by the rupture of a blood-vessel in or near the lungs, is seldom unwarranted, although it may be excessive; and though we can soon determine whether or not the accident is in the nature of a primary disease, or symptomatic of some incurable pulmonary affection, and dissipate or corroborate our patient's apprehensions accordingly, it is no more than prudent to warn one who has once experienced this injury, against any exertions or excesses which have a tendency to interfere with the action of the lungs, by keeping in sight the *possibility* of a fatal relapse.—To return, however, to Mr. Stafford.

His recovery was tardier than I could have expected. His extraordinary excitability completely neutralized the effect of my lowering and calming system of treatment. I could not persuade him to *give his mind rest*; and the mere glimpse of a newspaper occasioned such a flutter and agitation of spirits, that I forbade them altogether for a fortnight. I was in the habit of writing my prescriptions in his presence, and pausing long over them for the purpose of unsuspectingly observing him; and though he would tell me that his "mind was still as a stagnant pool,"—his intense air, his corrugated brows and fixed eyes, evinced the most active exercise of thought. When in a sort of half-dozing state he would often mutter about the subjects nearest his heart. "Ah! *must* go out—the ——— bill, their touchstone—ay—though ———, and his Belial tongue." \* \* \* "'Tis cruel—'tis tantalizing, doctor," he said one morning, "to find one's self held by the foot in

was going to leave him in the hands of a surgeon; but seeing that his alarm had positively half maddened him, I resolved to give him what assistance I could. I soon found that his fears were chimerical, but he would not believe me. When, however, I succeeded in convincing him that "all was yet right with him,"—by referring the sensations which had alarmed him to an unperceived derangement of his *dress*, tongue cannot utter, nor I ever forget, the ecstasy with which he at last "gave to the winds his fears." He insisted on my accepting one of the largest fees that had ever been tendered me.

this way—like a chained eagle! The world forgets every one that slips for a moment from public view! Alas, alas! my plans—my projects—are all unravelling!”—“Thy sun, young man, may go down at noon!” I often thought, when reflecting on his restless, fierce, and ardent spirit. He wanted case-hardening—long *physical* training, to fit him for the harassing and exhausting campaign on which he had entered. Truly, truly, your politician should have a frame of adamant, and a mind “thereto conforming strictly.”

I found Mr. Stafford one day in high chafe about a sarcastic allusion in the debate to a sentiment which he had expressed in parliament—“Oh—one might wither that fellow with a word or two, the stilted noodle!” said he, pointing to the passage, while his eye glanced like lightning. “You’ll more likely wither your own prospects of ever making the trial, if you don’t moderate your exertions,” I replied. He smiled incredulously, and made me no answer; but continued twisting about his pencil-case with a rapidity and energy which showed the high excitement under which he was labouring. His hard, jerking, irregular pulse, beating on the average a hundred a minute, excited my lively apprehensions, lest the increased action of the heart should bring on a second fit of blood-spitting. I saw clearly that it would be in vain for him to court the repose essential to his convalescence, so long as he continued in town; and with infinite difficulty, prevailed on him to betake himself to the country. We wrung a promise from him that he would set about “unbending” “unharnessing,” as he called it—that he would give “his constitution fair play.” He acknowledged that to gain the objects he had proposed to himself, it was necessary for him to “husband his resources;” and briskly echoed my quotation—“*neque semper arcum, tendit Apollo.*” In short, we dismissed him in the confident expectation of seeing him return, after a requisite interval, with re-

cruited energies of body and mind. He had scarcely, however, been gone a fortnight, before a paragraph ran the round of the daily papers, announcing, as nearly ready for publication, a political pamphlet "by Charles Stafford, Esq., M.P.;"—and in less than three weeks—sure enough—a packet was forwarded to my residence, from the publisher, containing my rebellious patient's pamphlet, accompanied with the following hasty note:—"Δσκληπτε—Even with you!—you did not, you will recollect, interdict *writing*; and I have contrived to *amuse* myself with the accompanying trifle.—Please look at page —, and see the kind things I have said of poor Lord —, the worthy who attacked me the other evening in the House, behind my back." This "trifle" was in the form of a pamphlet of sixty-four pages, full of masterly argumentation and impetuous eloquence; but unfortunately, owing to the publisher's dilatoriness, it came "a day behind the fair," and attracted but little attention.

His temporary rustication, however, was attended with at least two beneficial results—recruited health, and—the heart of Lady Emma —, the beautiful daughter of a nobleman remotely connected with Mr. Stafford's family. This attachment proved powerful enough to alienate him for a while from the turmoils of political life; for not only did the beauty, wealth, and accomplishments of Lady Emma — render her a noble prize, worthy of great effort to obtain, but a powerful military rival had taken the field before Mr. Stafford made his appearance, and seemed disposed to move heaven and earth to carry her off. It is needless to say how such a consideration was calculated to rouse and absorb all the energies of the young senator, and keep him incessantly on the *qui vive*. It is said that the lady wavered for some time, uncertain to which of her brilliant suitors she should give the nod of preference. Chance decided the matter. It came to pass that a contested election arose

in the county; and Mr. Stafford made a very animated and successful speech from the hustings—not far from which, at a window, was standing Lady Emma—in favour of her ladyship's brother, one of the candidates. *Io triumphe!* That happy evening the enemy “surrendered at discretion:” and ere long it was known far and wide, that—in newspaper slang—“an affair was on the *tapis*,” between Mr. Stafford and the “beautiful and accomplished Lady Emma —,” &c. &c. &c.

It is my firm persuasion, that the diversion in his pursuits effected by this “affair,” by withdrawing Mr. Stafford for a considerable interval from cares and anxieties which he was physically unable to cope with, lengthened his life for many years; giving England a splendid statesman, and this my Diary the sad records which are now to be laid before the reader.

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One characteristic of our profession, standing, as it were, in such sad and high relief as to scare many a sensitive mind from entering into its service, is, that it is concerned almost exclusively with the dark side of humanity. As carnage and carrion guide the gloomy flight of the vulture, so MISERY is the signal for a medical man's presence. *We* have to do daily with broken hearts, blighted hopes, pain, sorrow, death! and though the satisfaction arising from the due discharge of our duties, be that of the good Samaritan—a rich return—we cannot help counting the heavy cost, aching hearts, weary limbs, privations, ingratitude. Dark array! It may be considered placing the matter in a whimsical point of view, yet I have often thought that the two great professions of Law and Medicine are but foul carrion birds—the one preying on the moral, as the other on the physical, rottenness of mankind.

“Thou who art well need not a physician,” say the Scriptures: and on this ground, it is easy to

explain the melancholy hue pervading these papers. They are mirrors reflecting the dark colours which are exposed to them. It is true, that some remote relations, arising out of the particular combinations of circumstances first requiring our professional interference, may afford, as it were, a passing gleam of distant sunshine, in the development of some trait of beautiful character, some wondrous "good, from seeming ill educes:" but these are incidental only, and evanescent—enhancing, not relieving, the gloom and sorrow amid which we move. A glimpse of Heaven would but aggravate the horrors of Hell. These chilling reflections force themselves on my mind, when surveying the very many entries in my Diary concerning the eminent individual whose case I am now narrating—concerning one who seemed born to bask in the brightness of life—to reap the full harvest of its joys and comforts, and yet "walked in darkness!" Why should it have been so? Answer—*Ambition*.

---

The reader must hurry on with me through the next ten years of Mr. Stafford's life, during which period he rose with almost unprecedented rapidity. He had hardly time, as it were, to get warm in his nest, before he was called to lodge in the one above him, and then the one above that, and so on upwards, till people began to view his progress with their hands shading their dazzled eyes, while they exclaimed—"Fast for the top of the tree!" He was formed for political popularity. He had a most winning, captivating, commanding style of delivery, which was always employed in the steady consistent advocacy of one line of principles. The splendour of his talents—his tact and skill in debate—the immense extent and accuracy of his political information—early attracted the notice of ministers, and he was not suffered to wait long before they secured his services, by giving him a popular and influential

office. During all this time, he maintained a very friendly intimacy with me, and often put into requisition my professional services.

\* \* \* \* \*

About eight o'clock one Saturday evening, I received the following note from Mr. Stafford:—

“Dear —, excuse excessive haste. Let me entreat you (I will hereafter account for the suddenness of this application) to make instant arrangements for spending with me *the whole* of to-morrow (Sunday), at —, and to set off from town in time for breakfasting with Lady Emma and myself. Your presence is required by most urgent and *special* business; but allow me to beg you will appear at breakfast with an unconcerned air—as a chance visiter. Yours always, faithfully,

“C. STAFFORD.”

The words “*whole*” and “*special*” were thrice underscored; and this, added to the very unusual illegibility of the writing, betrayed an urgency, and even agitation, which a little disconcerted me. The abruptness of the application occasioned me some trouble in making the requisite arrangements. As, however, it was not a busy time with me, I contrived to find a substitute for the morrow in my friend Dr. D—.

It was a lovely Sabbath morning, in July 18—, that, in obedience to the above hurried summons, I set off on horseback from the murky metropolis; and after rather more than a two hours' ride, found myself entering the grounds of Mr. Stafford, who had recently purchased a beautiful villa on the banks of the Thames. It was about nine o'clock, and nature seemed but freshly awakened from the depth of her overnight's slumbers—her tresses all uncurled, as it were—and her perfumed robes glistening with the pearls of morning dew. A deep and rich repose brooded over the scene, subduing every feeling of

my soul into sympathy. A groom took my horse; and finding that neither Mr. Stafford nor Lady Emma were yet stirring, I resolved to walk about and enjoy the scenery. In front of the house stretched a fine lawn, studded here and there with laurel bushes, and other elegant shrubs, and sloping down to the river's edge; and on each side of the villa, and behind, were trees disposed with the most beautiful and picturesque effect imaginable. Birds were carolling cheerfully and loudly on all sides of me, as though they were intoxicated with their own "woodland melody." I walked about as amid enchantment, breathing the balminess and fragrance of the atmosphere, as the wild horse snuffs the scent of the desert. How keenly are Nature's beauties appreciable when but rarely seen by her unfortunate admirer who is condemned to a town-life! I stood on the lawn by the river's edge, watching the ripple of the retiring tide, pondering within myself whether it was possible for such scenes as these to have lost all charm for their restless owner. Did he relish or tolerate them? Could the pursuits of ambition have blunted, deadened his sensibilities to the beauty of nature, the delights of home? These thoughts were passing through my mind, when I was startled by the tapping of a loose glove over my shoulder; and on turning round beheld Mr. Stafford, in his flowered morning-gown, and his face partially shaded from the glare of the morning sun. "Good morning, doctor—good morning," said he; "a thousand thanks for your attention to my note of last night; but see! yonder stands Lady Emma, waiting breakfast for us," pointing to her ladyship, who was standing at the window of the breakfast-room. Mr. Stafford put his arm into mine, and we walked up to the house. "My dear sir, what can be the meaning of your ——" said I, with an anxious look.

"Not a word—not a breath—if you please, till we are alone after breakfast."

"Well—you are bent on tantalizing!—What *can* be the matter? What is this mountain-mystery?"

"It may prove a molehill, perhaps," said he, carelessly; "but we'll see after breakfast."

"What an enchanting spot you have of it!" I exclaimed, pausing, and looking around me.

"Oh, perfectly paradisaical, I dare say," he replied, with an air of indifference that was quite laughable. "By-the-way," he added hurriedly, "did you hear any rumour about Lord ——'s resignation late last night?"—"Yes."—"And his successor, is *he* talked of?" he inquired, eagerly. "Mr. C——."—"Mr. C——! Is it possible? Ah, ha—" he muttered, raising his hand to his cheek, and looking thoughtfully downwards.

"Come, come, Mr. Stafford, 'tis now my turn, do drop these eternal politics for a few moments, I beg."—"Ay, ay, 'still harping on my daughter,' I'll *sink the ship* for a while, as our town friends say. But I really beg pardon, 'tis rude, very. But here we are. Lady Emma, Dr.——," said he, as we approached her ladyship through the open stained-glass doorway. She sat before the breakfast urn, looking to my eyes as bloomingly beautiful as at the time of her marriage, though ten summers had waved their silken pinions over her head, but so softly as scarce to flutter or fade a feature in passing. Yes, thus she sat in her native loveliness and dignity, the airiness of girlhood passed away into the mellowed maturity of womanhood! She looked the *beau-ideal* of simple elegance in her long snowy morning-dress, her clustering auburn hair surmounted with a slight gossamer network of blonde; not an ornament about her! I have her figure, even at this interval of time, most vividly before me, as she sat on that memorable morning, unconscious that the errand which made me her guest, involved—but I will not anticipate. She adored, nay, idolized, her husband—little as she saw of him—and he was in turn as fondly attached



to her as a man could be whose whole soul was swallowed up in ambition. Yes, he was not the first to whom political pursuits have proved a very disease, shedding blight and mildew over the heart!

I thought I detected an appearance of restraint in the manner of each. Lady Emma often cast a furtive glance of anxiety at her husband—and with reason—for his features wore an air of repressed uneasiness. He was now and then absent, and, when addressed by either of us, would reply with a momentary sternness of manner—passing, however, instantly away—which showed that his mind was occupied with unpleasant or troubled thoughts. He seemed at last aware that his demeanour attracted our observation, and took to acting. All traces of anxiety or uneasiness disappeared, and gave place to his usual perfect urbanity and cheerfulness. Lady Emma's manner towards me, too, was cooler than usual, which I attributed to the fact of my presence not having been sufficiently accounted for. My embarrassment may be easily conceived.

"What a delicious morning!" exclaimed Lady Emma, looking through the window at the fresh blue sky and the cheery prospect beneath. We echoed her sentiments. "I think," said I, "that could I call such a little paradise as this *mine*, I would quit the smoke and uproar of London for ever!"—"I wish all thought with you Dr. —," replied her ladyship with a sigh, looking touchingly at her husband.

"What opportunities for tranquil thought!" I went on.

"Ay, and so forth!" said Mr. Stafford, gayly. "Listen to another son of peace and solitude, my Lord Roscommon.

'Hail, sacred solitude! from this calm bay  
I view the world's tempestuous sea,  
And with wise pride despise  
All those senseless vanities:  
With pity moved for others, cast away

On rocks of hopes and fears, I see them toss'd  
 On rocks of folly, and of vice I see them lost :  
 Some the prevailing malice of the great,  
 Unhappy men, or adverse fate,  
 Sunk deep into the gulfs of an afflicted state :  
 But more, far more, a numberless prodigious train,  
 While virtue courts them, but, alas ! in vain,  
 Fly from her kind embracing arms,  
 Deaf to her fondest call, blind to her greatest charms,  
 And, sunk in pleasures and in brutish ease,  
 They, in their shipwreck'd state, themselves obdurate please.

'Here may I always on this downy grass,  
 Unknown, unseen, my easy moments pass,  
 Till, with a gentle force, victorious Death  
 My solitude invade,  
 And, stopping for a while my breath,  
 With ease convey me to a better shade !'

"*There's* for you, my lady ! Well sung, my Lord Roscommon ! Beautiful as true !" exclaimed Mr. Stafford, gayly, as soon as he had concluded repeating the above ode, in his own distinct and beautiful elocution, with real pathos of manner ; but his mouth and eye betrayed that his own mind sympathized not with the emotions of the poet, but rather despised the air of inglorious repose they breathed. The tears were in Lady Emma's eyes, as she listened to him ! Presently one of his daughters, a fine little girl about six years of age, came sidling and simpering into the room, and made her way to her mother. She was a lively, rosy, arch-eyed little creature—and her father looked fondly at her for a moment, exclaiming, "Well Eleanor !" and his thoughts had evidently soon passed far away. The conversation turned on Mr. Stafford's reckless, absorbing pursuit of politics—which Lady Stafford and I deplored—and entreated him to give more of his time and affections to domestic concerns. \* \* \* "You talk to me as if I were dying," said he, rather petulantly, "why should I not pursue my profession—my legitimate profession ?—As for your still waters—your pastoral simplicities—your Arcadian bliss—pray what inducements have I to run counter to my own inclinations to cruise what you are pleased to

call the stormy sea of politics?"—"What inducements?—Charles, Charles—can't you find them *here*?" said his lady, pointing to herself and daughter. Mr. Stafford's eyes filled with tears, even to overflowing, and he grasped her hand with affectionate energy, took his smiling unconscious daughter on his knee, and kissed her with passionate fervour. "*Semel insanavimus omnes*," he muttered to me, a few moments after, as if ashamed of the display he had recently made. For my own part I saw that he occasionally lost the control over feelings which were, for some reason or other, disturbed and excited. What could possibly have occurred? Strange as it may seem, a thought of the real state of matters, as they will presently be disclosed, never for an instant crossed my mind. I longed—I almost sickened—for the promised opportunity of being alone with him. It was soon afforded me by the servants appearing at the door, and announcing the carriage.

"Oh dear! positively prayers will be over!" exclaimed Lady Emma, rising, and looking hurriedly at her watch, "we've quite forgotten church hours! do you accompany us, doctor?" said she, looking at me.

"No, Emma," replied Mr. Stafford, quickly, "you and the family must go alone this morning—I shall stop and keep Dr. — company, and take a walk over the country for once." Lady Emma, with an unsatisfied glance at both of us, withdrew. Mr. Stafford immediately proposed a walk; and we were soon on our way to a small Gothic alcove near the water side.

"Now, doctor, to the point," said he, abruptly, as soon as we were seated. "Can I reckon on a *real* friend in you?" scrutinizing my features closely.

"Most certainly you may," I replied, with astonishment. "What can I do for you?—Something or other is wrong, I fear! can I do any thing for you in any way?"

"Yes," said he, deliberately, and looking fixedly at me, as if to mark the effect of his words; "I shall require a proof of your friendship soon; I must have your services this evening—at seven o'clock."

"Gracious heaven, Mr. Stafford!—why—why—is it possible that—do I guess aright?" I stammered almost breathless, and rising from my seat.

"Oh, doctor—don't be foolish—excuse me—but don't—don't, I beg. Pray give me your answer! I'm sure you understand my question." Agitation deprived me for a while of utterance.

"I beg an answer, Dr. —," he resumed, coldly, "as, if you refuse, I shall be very much inconvenienced. 'Tis but a little affair—a silly business, that circumstances have made inevitable—I'm sure you must have seen a hint at it in the last night's papers.—Don't misunderstand me," he proceeded, seeing me continue silent; "I don't wish you to take an active part in the business—but to be on the spot—and, in the event of any thing unfortunate happening to me—to hurry home here, and prepare Lady Emma and the family—that is all. Mr. G——," naming a well-known army surgeon, "will attend professionally." I was so confounded with the suddenness of the application, that I could do nothing more than mutter indistinctly my regret at what had happened.

"Well Doctor —," he continued, in a haughty tone, "I find that, after all, I have been mistaken in my man. I own I did not expect that this—the first favour I have ever asked at your hands, and, possibly, the last—would have been refused. But I must insist on an answer one way or another; you must be aware I've no time to lose."

"Mr. Stafford—pardon me—you mistake me! Allow me a word; you cannot have committed yourself rashly in this affair! Consider Lady Emma—your children—"

"I have—I have," he answered, grasping my hand, while his voice faltered, "and I need hardly inform

you that it is that consideration only which occasions the little disturbance of manner you may have noticed. But you are man of the world enough to be aware that I must go through with the business. I am not the challenger."

I asked him for the particulars of the affair. It originated in a biting sarcasm which he had uttered, with reference to a young nobleman, in the House of Commons, on Friday evening, which had been construed into a personal affront, and for which an apology had been demanded;—mentioning the alternative in terms almost approaching to insolence, evidently for the purpose of provoking him into a refusal to retract or apologize.

"It's my firm persuasion that there is a plot among a certain party to destroy me—to remove an obnoxious member from the House—and this is the scheme they have hit upon! I have succeeded, I find, in annoying the — interest beyond measure; and so they must at all events get rid of me! Ay, this *cur* of a lordling it is," he continued, with bitter emphasis, "who is to make my sweet wife a widow, and my children orphans—for Lord — is notoriously one of the best shots in the country! Poor—poor Emma!" he exclaimed with a sigh, thrusting his hand into his bosom, and looking down dejectedly. We neither of us spoke for some time. "Would to Heaven we had never been married!" he resumed. "Poor Lady Emma leads a wretched life of it, I fear! But I honestly warned her that my life would be strewn with thorny cares, even to the grave's brink!"

"So you have really pitched upon *this* evening—Sunday evening, for this dreadful business?" I inquired.

"Exactly. We must be on the spot by seven precisely. I say *we*, doctor," laying his hand on mine. I consented to accompany him. "Come now, that's kind! I'll remember you for it. \* \* \* It is now nearly half past twelve," looking at his watch, "and

by one, my Lord A——," mentioning a well-known nobleman "is to be here; who is to stand by me on the occasion. I wish he were here;—for I've added a codicil to my will, and want you both to witness my signature. \* \* \* I look a little fagged—don't I?" he asked with a smile. I told him he certainly looked rather sallow and worn. "How does our friend walk his paces?" he inquired, baring his wrist for me to feel his pulse. The circulation was little, if at all disturbed, and I told him so. "It would not have been very wonderful if it *had*, I think; for I've been up half the night—till nearly five this morning, correcting the last two proof-sheets of my speech on the —— bill, which —— is publishing. I think it will read well; at least I hope it will, in common justice to myself, for it was most vilely curtailed and misrepresented by the reporters. By-the-way—would you believe it!—Sir ——'s speech that night was nothing but a hundredth hash of mine which I delivered in the House more than eight years ago!" said he, with an eager and contemptuous air. I made him no reply; for my thoughts were too sadly occupied with the dreadful communication he had recently made me. I abhorred, and do abhor and despise duelling, both in theory and practice; and now, to have to be present at one, and one in which my friend—*such* a friend!—was to be a principal. This thought, and a glance at the possible, nay, probable desolation and broken-heartedness which might follow, was almost too much for me. But I knew Mr. Stafford's disposition too well to attempt expostulation—especially in the evidently morbid state of his feelings.

"Come, come, doctor, let's walk a little! Your feelings flag!—You might be going to receive *satisfaction* yourself," with a bitter sneer, "instead of seeing it given and taken by others!—Come, cheer, cheer up." He put his arm in mine, and led me a few steps across the lawn, by the water-side. "Dear,

dear me!" said he, with a chagrined air, pulling out his watch hastily—"I wish to heaven, my Lord A—— would make his appearance! I protest her ladyship will have returned from church before we have settled our few matters, unless, by-the-way, she drive round by Admiral ——'s, as she talked of last night. Oh, my God, think of my leaving her and the girls, with a gay air, as if we parted but for an hour, when it *may* be for ever! And yet what *can* one do?" While he was speaking, my eye caught sight of a servant making his way towards us rapidly through the shrubbery, bearing in his hand a letter, which he put into Mr. Stafford's hands, saying, a courier had brought it that moment, and was waiting to take an answer back to town. "Ah—very good—let him wait till I come," said Mr. Stafford. "Excuse me, Doctor ——" bursting open the envelope with a little trepidation, and putting it into my hands, while he read the enclosed note. The envelope bore in one corner the name of the premier, and in the other the words, "private and confidential," and was sealed with the private crest and coronet of the earl.

"Great God—read it!" exclaimed Mr. Stafford, thrusting the note before me, and elevating his eyes and hands despairingly. Much agitated myself, at witnessing the effect of the communication on my friend, I took it and read nearly as follows :—

"My dear Stafford,—I had late last night his majesty's commands to offer you the seals of the —— office, accompanied with the most gracious expressions of consideration for yourself personally, and his conviction that you will discharge the important duties henceforth devolving upon you with honour to yourself and advantage to his majesty's councils. In all which, I need hardly assure you, I most heartily concur. I beg to add, that I shall feel great pride and pleasure in having you for a colleague—and it has not been my fault that such was not the case

earlier. May I entreat your answer by the bearer's return? as the state of public affairs will not admit of delay in filling up so important an office. I beg you will believe me, ever yours, most faithfully,

*"Whitehall, Sunday noon, 12 o'clock."*

After hurriedly reading the above, I continued holding the letter in my hands, speechlessly gazing at Mr. Stafford. Well might such a bitter balm excite the tumultuous conflict of passions which the varying features of Mr. Stafford—now flushed, now pale—too truly evidenced. This dazzling proffer made him only a few hours before his standing the fatal fire of an accomplished duellist!—I watched him in silent agony. At length he clasped his hands with passionate energy, and exclaimed—"Oh, madness—madness—madness!—Just within reach of the prize I have run for all my life!" At that instant a wherry-full of bedizened Londoners passed close before us on their way towards Richmond; and I saw by their whispers that they had recognized Mr. Stafford. He also saw them, and exclaimed to me, in a tone I shall never forget, "Happy, happy fools!" and turned away towards the house. He removed his arm from mine, and stood pondering for a few moments with his eyes fixed on the grass.

"Doctor, what's to be done?"—he almost shouted, turning suddenly to me, grasping my arm, and staring vacantly into my face. I began to fear lest he should totally lose the command of himself.

"For God's sake Mr. Stafford, be calm!—Recollect yourself!—or madness—ruin—I know not what—is before you!" I said, in an earnest, imploring tone, seeing his eye still glaring fixedly upon me. At length he succeeded in overmastering his feelings.—"Oh—folly, folly, this!—Inevitable!—Inevitable!" he exclaimed, in a calmer tone. "But the letter must be answered. What can I say, doctor?" putting



his arm in mine, and walking up to the house rapidly. We made our way to the library, and Mr. Stafford sat down before his desk. He opened his portfeuille slowly and thoughtfully. "Of course—decline?"—said he, with a profound sigh, turning to me with his pen in his hand.

"No—assuredly, it would be precipitate. Wait for the issue of this sad-business. You may escape."—"No—no—no! My Lord —— is singularly prompt and decisive in all he does, especially in disposing of his places. I must—I must—ay"—beginning to write—"I must respectfully decline—altogether. But on what grounds? Oh, God! even should I escape to-day, I am ruined for ever in parliament!—What will become of me?" He laid down the pen, and moved his hand rapidly over his face.

"Why—perhaps it would be better.—Tell his lordship frankly how you are circumstanced."

"Tut!" he exclaimed, impetuously, "ask him for *peace-officers*! a likely thing!" he pressed both his hands on his forehead, leaning on his elbows over the desk. A servant that moment appeared, and said—"Please, sir, the man says he had orders not to wait more than five minutes—"

"Begone!—Let him wait, sir!" thundered Mr. Stafford—and resumed his pen.

"Can't you throw yourself on his lordship's personal good feeling towards you, and say that such an offer requires consideration—that it must interfere with, and derange on the instant many of your political engagements—and that your answer shall be at Whitehall by—say *nine* o'clock this evening? So you will gain time, at least."

"Good. 'Twill do—a fair plea for time;—but I'm afraid!" said he, mournfully; and taking his pen, he wrote off an answer to that effect. He read it to me—folded it up—sealed it—directed it in his usual bold and flowing hand—I rung for the ser-

want—and in a few moments we saw the courier galloping past the window.

“Now, doctor, isn’t this enough to madden me? Oh, God! it’s intolerable!” said he, rising and approaching me,—“my glorious prospects to be darkened by this speck—this atom of puppyism—of worthlessness,”—naming Lord —, his destined opponent.—“Oh—if there were—if there *were*—” he resumed, speaking fiercely through his closed teeth, his eyes glaring downwards, and his hands clenched. He soon relaxed. “Well, well! it can’t be helped; ’tis inevitable—*πάντως πέπρωται ταῦτα καὶ οὐκ ἐκφεύξεται*—as Medea says! Ah—Lord A—— at last,” he said, as a gentleman, followed by his groom, rode past the window. In a few moments he entered the library. His stature was lofty, his features commanding, and his bearing fraught with composure and military hauteur. “Ah,—Stafford,—good morning!” said he, approaching and shaking him warmly by the hand; “upon my soul I’m sorry for the business I’m come about.”—“I can sympathize with you, I think,” replied Mr. Stafford, calmly; “My lord, allow me—Dr. —.” I bowed. “Fully in my confidence—an old friend,” he whispered Lord A—— in consequence of his lordship’s inquisitive suspicious glance. \* \* “Well, you must teach the presumptuous puppy better manners this evening,” said his lordship, adjusting his black stock with an indifferent air!

“Ay—nothing like a LEADEN LESSON,” replied Mr. Stafford, with a cold smile.

“For a leaden *head*, too, by —!” rejoined his lordship quickly. “We shall run you pretty fair through, I think; for we’ve determined on putting you up at six paces—”

“Six paces!—why we shall blow one another to —!” echoed Mr. Stafford, with consternation. “‘*Twould* be rather hard to go there in such bad company, I own. Six paces!” continued Mr. Stafford;

"how *could* you be so absurd!—It will be deliberate murder!"

"Poh, poh!—never a bit of it, my dear fellow—never a bit of it!—I've put many up at that distance—and, believe me, the chances are ten to two that both miss."

"Both miss at six paces?" inquired Mr. Stafford, with an incredulous smile.

"Ay! both miss, I say; and no wonder either! Such contiguity!—Egad, 'twould make a *statue* nervous!"

"But A——! have you *really* determined on putting us up at six paces?" again inquired Mr. Stafford, earnestly.

"Most unquestionably," replied his lordship, briskly; adding, rather coldly, "I flatter myself, Stafford, that when a man's *honour* is at stake, six or sixty paces are matters equally indifferent."

"Ay, ay, A——, I dare say," replied Mr. Stafford, with a melancholy air; "but 'tis hard to die by the hands of a puppy, and under such circumstances!—Did you not meet a man on horseback?"

"Ay, ay," replied his lordship, eagerly, "I did—a courier of my Lord ——'s, and thundering townward at a prodigious rate—any doings there between you and the premier?"

"Read!" said Mr. Stafford, putting Lord ——'s letter into his hand. Before his lordship had more than half read it, he let it fall on the table, exclaiming, "Good God! was there ever such an unfortunate thing in the world before!—Ha'n't it really driven you mad, Stafford?"

"No," he replied, with a sigh; "the thing must be borne!" Lord A—— walked a few steps about the room, thoughtfully, with energetic gestures. "If—if I could but find a pretext—if I *could* but come across the puppy, in the interval—I'd give my life to have a shot preparatory with him!" he muttered. Mr. Stafford smiled. "While I think of it,"

said he, opening his desk, "here's my will. I wish you and Dr. — to see me sign." We did—and affixed our names.

\* \* \* \* \*

"By-the-way," said his lordship, suddenly addressing Mr. Stafford, who with his chin resting on his hands, and his features wearing an air of intense thought, had been silent for some minutes; how do you put off Lady Emma to-day? How do you account for your absence?"

"Why, I've told her we three were engaged to dinner at Sir —'s, naming a neighbouring baronet—I'm afraid it will kill Lady Emma if I fall," he faltered, while the tears rushed to his eyes. He stepped towards the decanters, which had, a little while before, been brought in by the servant; and after asking us to do the same, poured out a glass and drank it hastily—and another—and another.

"Well, this is one of the saddest affairs, altogether, that I ever knew!" exclaimed his lordship. "Stafford—I feel for you from my heart's core—I do!" he continued, grasping him affectionately by the hand; "here's to your success to-night, and God's blessing to Lady Emma!" Mr. Stafford started suddenly from him, and walked to the window, where he stood for a few minutes in silence. "Lady Emma is returning, I see," said he, approaching us. His features exhibited little or no traces of agitation. He poured out another glass of wine, and drank it off at a draught, and had hardly set down the glass before the carriage-steps were heard letting down at the door. Mr. Stafford turned to them with an eye of agony, as his lady and one of her little girls descended.

"I think we'd perhaps better not join her ladyship before our setting off," said Lord A——, looking anxiously at poor Mr. Stafford.

"Oh, but we *will*," said he, leading to the door. He had perfectly recovered his self-possession. I never knew a man that had such remarkable command of

face and manner as Mr. Stafford. I was amazed at the gay—almost *noucheant* air with which he walked up to Lady Emma—asked her about the sermon—whether she had called at Admiral ——’s—and several other such questions.

“Ah—and how is it with you, my little Hebe—eh?” said he, taking the laughing girl into his arms, laughing, tickling, and kissing her, with all a father’s fondness. I saw his heart was swelling within him; and the touching sight brought, with powerful force, to my recollection, a similar scene in the *Medea* of Euripides, where the mother is bewailing over the “last smile” of her children.\* He succeeded in betraying no painful emotion in his lady’s presence—and Lord A—— took good care to engage her in incessant conversation.

“What does your ladyship say to a walk through the grounds?” said he, proffering his arm—which she accepted, and we all walked out together. The day was beautiful, but oppressively sultry, and we turned our steps towards the plantations. Mr. Stafford and I walked together, and slipped a little behind for the purpose of conversation. “I won’t have much opportunity of speaking with you, doctor,” said he, “so I’ll say what is uppermost now. Be sure, my dear doctor, to hurry from the field—which is about four miles from my house—to Lady Emma—in the event of my being either killed or wounded—and do what you think best, to prepare my wife for the event. I cannot trust her to better—gentler hands than yours—my old—my tried friend!—You know where my will is—and I’ve given directions for my funeral.”

\* I shall be pardoned, I am sure, by the classical reader, for reminding him of the exquisite language of the original.

Φῦ! φῦ!—τί προσδέκαιο δὲ μ’ ὄμμασιν, τέκνα;  
—τί προσελάττει τὸν πανόπιστον γέλων;  
ἄι—ἄι!—καρδία γὰρ διχέσται  
—ἔμμη φαιδρὸν ὡς εἶδον τέκνων!  
ἄνδρ’ ἂν ἀναλαμπὴν!—Εἰν. Μ. κ. 1036-40.

"Oh dear, dear Stafford," I interrupted him, moved almost to tears, "don't speak so hopelessly!"

"Oh, doctor—nonsense—there's no disguising matters from one's self. Is there a chance for me? No—I'm a murdered man—and can you doubt it? Lord——can do only one thing well in the world, and that is, hit his man at any distance; and then *six paces* off each other! Lord A—— may say what he likes; but I call it murder. However, the absurd customs of society *must* be complied with!—I hope," he added, after a pause, "that when the nine-days'-wonder of the affair shall have passed off—if I fall—when the press shall cease its lying about it—that my friends will do justice to my memory. God knows, I *really* love my country, and would have served it—it was my ambition to do so—but it's useless talking now!—I am excessively vexed that this affair should have occurred before the—— question comes on, in preparation for which I have been toiling incessantly, night and day, for this month past. I know that great expectations—" At that instant, Lord A—— and Lady Emma met us, and we had no further opportunity of conversing. We returned to lunch after a few minutes' longer walk.

"God bless you, Emma!" said Mr. Stafford, nodding, with an affectionate smile, as he took wine with his lady. He betrayed no emotion throughout the time we sat together—but conversed long—and often in a lively strain—on the popular topics of the day. He rung for his valet, and directed him to have his toilet ready—and to order the carriage for four o'clock. He then withdrew—and in about a quarter of an hour's time, returned, dressed in a blue surtout and white trousers. He was a very handsome, well-made man, and seemed dressed with particular elegance, I thought.

"Upon my honour, Charles—you are in a pretty *dinner-trim*," said Lady Emma, "and *all* of you, I protest!" she continued, looking round with surprise

at our walking-dress. Mr. Stafford told her, with a laugh, that we were going to meet none but bachelors.

"What!—why, where will the Miss ——s be?"

"Ordered out, my lady, for the day," replied Lord A——, with a smile, promptly, lest his friend should hesitate: "'tis to be a model of a divan, I understand!"

"Don't be late, love!" said Lady Emma to her husband, as he was drawing on his gloves; "you know I've little enough of you at all times—don't—don't be late!"

"No—no later than I can help, certainly!" said he, moving to the door.

"Say eleven—will you?—come, for *once*!"

"Well—yes. I *will* return by eleven," he replied, pointedly, and I detected a little tremulousness in his tone.

"Papa! papa!" exclaimed his little daughter, running across the hall, as her father was on the carriage-steps; "Papa! papa! may I sit up to-night till you come home?" He made no reply, but beckoned us in, hurriedly—sat back in his seat—thundered, "Drive on, sir!" and burst into tears.

"Oh, my dear fellow—Stafford—Stafford! This will never *do*. What will our friends on the ground say?" inquired Lord A——.

"What they like!" replied Mr. Stafford, sternly, still in tears. He soon recovered himself.

\* \* After driving some time, "Now, let me give you a bit of advice," said Lord A——, in an earnest tone, "we shall say only one word, by way of signal—'Fire!' and be sure to fire while you are in the act of raising your pistol."

"Oh, yes—yes—yes—I understand—"

"Well, but be *sure*; don't think of pointing first, and then firing—or, by ——, you'll assuredly fire over his head, or fire far on one side. Only recollect to do as I say, and you will take him full in the ribs, or clip him in the neck, or at least wing him."

"My dear fellow, do you take me for a novice? Do you forget my affair with ——?" inquired Mr. Stafford, impatiently.

"I promised to meet G—— about here," said Lord A——, putting his head out of the window. "Egad, if he is not punctual, I don't know what we shall do, for he's got my pistol-case. Where— where is he?" he continued, looking up the road. "There!" he exclaimed, catching sight of a horseman riding at a very slow pace.—After we had overtaken him, and Lord A—— had taken the pistol-case into the carriage, and Mr. Stafford had himself examined the pistols carefully, we rode side by side till we came near the scene of action. During that time we spoke but little, and that little consisted of the most bitter and sarcastic expressions of Mr. Stafford's contempt for his opponent, and regret at the occurrence which had so tantalized him, alluding to Lord ——'s offer of the —— office. About ten minutes to seven we alighted, and gave the coachman orders to remain there till we returned. The evening was lovely—the glare of day "mellowed to that tender light" which characterizes a summer evening in the country. As we walked across the fields towards the appointed spot, I felt sick and faint with irrepressible agitation, and Mr. G——, the surgeon, with whom I walked, joked with me at my "squeamishness," much in the style of tars with sea-sick passengers. "There's nothing in it—nothing," said he; "they'll take care not to hurt one another. 'Tis a pity, too, that such a man as Mr. Stafford should run the risk. What a noise it will make!" I let him talk on, for I could not answer, till we approached the fatal field, which we entered by a gap. Lord A—— got through first. "Punctual, however," said he, looking round at Mr. Stafford, who was following. "There they are—just getting over the stile. Inimitable coxcomb!"

"Ay, there they are, sure enough," replied he,



shading his eyes. "A——, for God's sake take care not to put me against this sunshine—it will dazzle—"

"Oh, never fear; it will go down before then—'tis but just above the horizon now." A touching image, I thought! It might be so with Mr. Stafford—*his sun* "might go down—at noon!"

"Stop, my lord," said Mr. Stafford, motioning Lord A—— back, and pressing his hand to his forehead. "A moment—allow me! Let me see—is there any thing I've forgot?—Oh, I thought there was!" He hurriedly requested Lord A——, after the affair, in the event of its proving bloody, to call on the minister, and explain it all. Lord A—— promised to do so. "Ah—here, too," unbuttoning his surtout, "*this* must not be here, I suppose;" and he removed a small gold snuff-box from his right to his left waistcoat pocket. "Let the blockhead have his full chance."

"Stuff, stuff, Stafford! That's quixotic!" muttered Lord A——. He was much paler and more thoughtful than I had seen him all along. All this occurred in much less time than I have taken to tell it. We all passed into the field; and as we approached, saw Lord —— and his second, who were waiting our arrival. The appearance of the former was that of a handsome fashionable young man, with very light hair, and lightly dressed altogether; and he walked to and fro, switching about a little riding-cane. Mr. Stafford released Lord A——, who joined the other second, and commenced the preliminary arrangements.

I never saw a greater contrast than there was between the demeanour of Mr. Stafford and his opponent. There stood the former, his hat shading his eyes, his arms folded, eying the motions of his antagonist with a look of supreme, of utter contempt; for I saw his compressed and curled upper lip. Lord —— betrayed an anxiety—a visible effort to appear unconcerned. He "*overdid it*." He was

evidently as uneasy in the contiguity of Mr. Stafford as the rabbit shivering under the baleful glare of the rattlesnake's eye. One little circumstance was full of character at that agitating moment. Lord —, anxious to manifest every appearance of coolness and indifference, seemed bent on demolishing a nettle, or some other prominent weed, and was making repeated strokes at it with the little whip he held. *This*, a few seconds before his life was to be jeopardied! Mr. Stafford stood watching this puerile feat in the position I have formerly mentioned, and a withering smile stole over his features, while he muttered—if I heard correctly—"Poor boy! Poor boy!"

At length the work of loading being completed, and the distance—six paces—duly stepped out, the duellists walked up to their respective stations. Their proximity was perfectly frightful. The pistols were then placed in their hands, and we stepped to a little distance from them.

"Fire!" said Lord A—; and the word had hardly passed his lips before Lord —'s ball whizzed close past the ear of Mr. Stafford. The latter, who had not even elevated his pistol at the word of command, after eying his antagonist for an instant with a scowl of contempt, fired in the air, and then jerked the pistol away towards Lord —, with the distinctly audible words, "Kennel, sir! Kennel!" He then walked towards the spot where Mr. G— and I were standing. Would to Heaven he had never uttered the words in question! Lord — had heard them, and followed him, furiously exclaiming, "Do you call *this* satisfaction, sir?" and, through his second, insisted on a second interchange of shots; in vain did Lord A— vehemently protest that it was contrary to all the laws of duelling, and that he would leave the ground—they were inflexible. Mr. Stafford approached Lord A—, and whispered, "For God's sake, A—, don't hesitate. Load—load again! the fool will rush on his fate. Put us up

again, and see if I fire a second time in the air!" His second slowly and reluctantly assented, and re-loaded. Again the hostile couple stood at the same distance from each other, pale with fury; and at the word of command both fired, and both fell. At one bound I sprung towards Mr. Stafford, almost blind with agitation. Lord A—— had him propped against his knee, and with his white pocket-handkerchief was endeavouring to stanch a wound in the right side. Mr. Stafford's fire had done terrible execution, for his ball had completely shattered the lower jaw of his opponent, who was borne off the field instantly. Mr. Stafford swooned, and was some minutes before he recovered, when he exclaimed feebly, "God forgive me, and be with my poor wife!"—We attempted to move him, when he swooned a second time, and we were afraid it was all over with him. Again, however, he recovered; and, opening his eyes, he saw me with my fingers at his pulse. "Oh, doctor, doctor, what did you promise? Remember Lady Staf—" he could not get out the word. I waited till the surgeon had ascertained generally the nature of the wound, which he presently pronounced not fatal, and assisted in binding it up, and conveying him to the carriage. I then mounted Mr. G——'s horse, and hurried on to communicate the dreadful intelligence to Lady Emma. I galloped every step of the way, and found, on my arrival, that her ladyship had but a few moments before adjourned to the drawing-room, where she was sitting at coffee. Thither I followed the servant, who announced me. Lady Emma was sitting by the tea-table, and rose on hearing my name. When she saw my agitated manner, the colour suddenly faded from her cheeks. She elevated her arms, as if deprecating my intelligence; and before I could reach her, had fallen fainting on the floor.

\* \* \* \* \*

I cannot undertake to describe what took place on

that dreadful night. All was confusion—agony—despair. Mr. Stafford was in a state of insensibility when he arrived at home, and was immediately carried up to bed. The surgeon succeeded in extracting the ball, which had seriously injured the fifth and sixth ribs, but had not penetrated to the lungs. Though the wound was serious, and would require careful and vigilant treatment, there was no ground for apprehending a mortal issue. As for Lord —, I may anticipate his fate. The wound he had received brought on a lockjaw, of which he died in less than a week. And THIS is what is called SATISFACTION.

To return. All my attention was devoted to poor Lady Emma. She did not even ask to see her husband, or move to leave the drawing-room, after recovering from her swoon. She listened with apparent calmness to my account of the transaction, which, the reader may imagine, was as mild and mitigated in its details as possible. As I went on, she became more and more thoughtful, and continued, with her eyes fixed on the floor, motionless and silent. In vain did I attempt to rouse her, by soothing—threats—surprise. She would gaze full at me, and relapse into her former abstracted mood. At length the drawing-room door was opened by some one—who proved to be Lord A——, come to take his leave. Lady Emma sprang from the sofa, burst from my grasp, uttered a long, loud, and frightful peal of laughter, and then came fit after fit of the strongest hysterics I think I ever saw. \* \* \* About midnight, Dr. Baillie and Sir — arrived, and found their patients each insensible, and each in different apartments. Alas! alas! what a dreadful contrast between that hour and the hour of my arrival in the morning! Oh, ambition! Oh, political happiness—mockery!

Towards morning Lady Emma became calmer, and, under the influence of a pretty powerful dose of laudanum, fell into a sound sleep. I repaired to

the bedside of Mr. Stafford. He lay asleep, Mr. G—— the surgeon sitting on one side of the bed, and a nurse on the other. Yes, there lay the STATESMAN! his noble features, though overspread with a pallid, a cadaverous hue, still bearing the ineffaceable impress of intellect. There was a loftiness about the ample expanded forehead, and a stern commanding expression about the partially-knit eyebrows, and pallid compressed lips, which, even in the absence of the flashing eye, bespoke

———"the great soul,  
Like an imprison'd eagle, pent within,  
That fain would fly!"

"On what a slender thread hangs every thing in life!" thought I, as I stood silently at the foot of the bed, gazing on Mr. Stafford. To think of a man like Stafford, falling by the hand of an insignificant lad of a lordling—a titled bully! Oh, shocking and execrable custom of duelling!—blot on the escutcheon of a civilized people, which places greatness of every description at the mercy of the mean and worthless; which lyingly pretends to assert a man's honour, and atone for insult, by turning the tears of outraged feeling into—blood!

About eight o'clock in the morning [Monday], I set off for town, leaving my friend in the skilful hands of Mr. G——, and promising to return, if possible, in the evening. About noon, what was my astonishment to hear street-criers yelling every where a "full, true, and particular account of the bloody duel fought last night between Mr. Stafford and Lord ——!" Curiosity prompted me to purchase the trash. I need hardly say that it was preposterous nonsense. The "duellists," it seemed, "fired six shots apiece;"—and what will the reader imagine were the "dying" words of Mr. Stafford—according to these precious manufacturers of the marvellous!—"Mr. Stafford then raised himself on his second's knee,

and with a loud and solemn voice, said, 'I leave my everlasting hatred to Lord —, my duty to my king and country, my love to my family, and my precious soul to God!!!' "

The papers of the day, however, gave a tolerably accurate account of the affair, and unanimously stigmatized the "presumption" of Lord — in calling out such a man as Mr. Stafford—and on such frivolous grounds. *My name was, most fortunately, not even alluded to.* I was glancing through the columns of the evening ministerial paper, while the servant was saddling the horses for my return to the country, when my eye lit on the following paragraph: "Latest news. Lord — is appointed — Secretary. We understand that Mr. Stafford had the refusal of it." Poor Stafford! Lord A— had called on the minister, late on Sunday evening, and acquainted him with the whole affair. "Sorry—very," said the premier. "Rising man that, but we could not wait. Lord — is to be the man!" I arrived at Mr. Stafford's about nine o'clock, and made my way immediately to his bedroom. Lady Emma, pale and exhausted, sat by his bedside, her eyes swollen with weeping. At my request, she presently withdrew, and I took her place at my patient's side. He was not sensible of my presence for some time, but lay with his eyes half-open, and in a state of low muttering delirium. An unfortunate cough of mine close to his ear awoke him, and after gazing steadily at me for nearly a minute, he recognised me and nodded. He seemed going to speak to me—but I laid my finger on my lips to warn him against making the effort.

"One word—one only, doctor," he whispered hastily,—“who is the — Secretary?”—“Lord —,” I replied. On hearing the name, he turned his head away from me with an air of intense chagrin, and lay silent for some time. He presently uttered something like the words—“Too hot to hold him,”

—"unseat him,"—and apparently fell asleep. I found from the attendant that all was going on well—and that Mr. Stafford bade fair for a rapid recovery, if he would but keep his mind calm and easy. Fearful lest my presence, in the event of his waking again, might excite him into a talking mood, I slipped silently from the room, and betook myself to Lady Emma, who sat awaiting me in her boudoir. I found her in a flood of tears. I did all in my power to sooth her, by reiterating my solemn assurances that Mr. Stafford was beyond all danger, and wanted only quiet to recover rapidly.

"Oh, Doctor—! How could you deceive me so yesterday? You knew all about it! How could you look at my little children, and—" Sobs choked her utterance. "Well—I suppose you *could* not help it! I don't blame you—but my heart is nearly broken about it! Oh, this *honour*—this *honour*! I always thought Mr. Stafford above the foolery of such things!" She paused—I replied not—for I had not a word to say against what she uttered. I thought and felt with her.

"I would to Heaven that Mr. Stafford would forsake parliament for ever! These hateful politics! He has no peace or rest by day or night!" continued Lady Emma, passionately. "His nights are constantly turned into day—and his day is ever full of hurry and trouble! Heaven knows I would consent to be banished from society—to work for my daily bread—I would submit to any thing, if I could but prevail on Mr. Stafford to return to the bosom of his family!—Doctor, my heart's happiness is cankered and gone! Mr. Stafford does not *tolerate* me—his heart is not mine—it isn't—" So again she burst into tears. "What can your ladyship mean?" I inquired with surprise.

"What I say, doctor," she replied, sobbing, "he is wedded to ambition! ambition alone! Oh, I am often tempted to wish I had never seen or known him!

For the future, I shall live trembling from day to day, fearful of the recurrence of such frightful scenes as yesterday! his reason will be failing him—his *raison!*” she repeated, with a shudder, “and *then!*” Her emotions once more deprived her of utterance. I felt for her from my very soul! I was addressing some consolatory remark to her, when a gentle tapping was heard at the door. “Come in,” said Lady Emma, and Mr. Stafford’s valet made his appearance, saying, with hurried gestures and grimaces—“Ah, Docteur! Mons. déraisonné—il est fou! Il veut absolument voir Milord — ! Je ne puis lui faire passer cette idée là!”

“What *can* be the matter!” exclaimed Lady Emma, looking at me with alarm.

“Oh, only some little wandering, I dare say; but I’ll soon return and report progress!” said I, prevailing on her to wait my return, and hurrying to the sick chamber. To my surprise and alarm, I found Mr. Stafford sitting nearly bolt upright in bed, his eyes directed anxiously to the door.

“Doctor —,” said he, as soon as I had taken my seat beside him, “I insist on seeing Lord —,” naming the prime minister; “I positively insist upon it! Let his lordship be shown up instantly.” I implored him to lie down, at the peril of his life, and be calm; but he insisted on seeing Lord —. “He is gone, and left word that he would call at this time to-morrow,” said I, hoping to quiet him.

“Indeed! Good of him! What can he want? The office is disposed of. There! there! he is stepped back again! Show him up—show him up! What, insult the king’s prime minister? Show him up, Louis,” addressing his valet, adding drowsily, in a fainter tone, “and the members—the members—the—the—who paired off—who pair—” he sunk gradually down on the pillow, the perspiration burst forth, and he fell asleep. Finding he slept on tranquilly and soundly, I once more left him, and having ex-



plained it to Lady Emma, bade her good evening, and returned to town. The surgeon who was in constant attendance on him called at my house during the afternoon of the following day, and gave me so good an account of him, that I did not think it necessary to go down till the day after, as I had seriously broken in upon my own practice. When I next saw him he was mending rapidly. He even persuaded me into allowing him to have the daily papers read to him—a circumstance I much regretted after I left him, and suddenly recollected how often the public prints made allusions to him—some of them not very kindly or complimentary. But there was no resisting his importunity. He had a wonderful wheedling way with him. Two days after, he got me to consent to his receiving the visits of his political friends; and really the renewal of his accustomed stimulus conduced materially to hasten his recovery.

Scarce six weeks from the day of the duel was this indefatigable and ardent spirit, Mr. Stafford, on his legs in the House of Commons, electrifying it and the nation at large, by a speech of the most overwhelming power and splendour! He flung his scorching sarcasms mercilessly at the astounded Opposition, especially at those who had contrived to render themselves in any way prominent in their opposition to his policy *during his absence!* By an artful manœuvre of rhetoric—a skilful allusion to “recent unhappy circumstances,” he carried the House with him from the very commencement enthusiastically to the end, and was at last obliged to pause almost every other minute, that the cheering might subside. The unfortunate nobleman who had stepped into the shoes which had been first placed at Mr. Stafford’s feet—so to speak—came in for the cream of the whole! A ridiculous figure he cut! Jokes, even lampoons, fell upon him like a shower of missiles on a man in the pillory! He was a fat man, and sat perspiring under it! The instant Mr.

Stafford sat down, this unlucky personage arose to reply. His odd and angry gesticulations, as he vainly attempted to make himself heard amid incessant shouts of laughter, served to clinch the nail which had been fixed by Mr. Stafford; and the indignant senator presently left the House. Another—and another—and another of the singed ones, arose and “followed on the same side,” but to no purpose. It was in vain to buffet against the spring-tide of favour which had set in to Mr. Stafford! That night will not be forgotten by either his friends or his foes. He gained his point! within a fortnight he had ousted his rival, and was gazetted — Secretary! The effort he made, however, on the occasion last alluded to, brought him again under my hands for several days. Indeed, indeed, I never had such an intractable patient! He could not be prevailed on to show any mercy to his constitution—he would not give nature fair play. Night and day, morning, noon, evening—spring, summer, autumn, winter—found him toiling on the tempestuous ocean of politics, his mind ever laden with the most harassing and exhausting cares. The eminent situation he filled brought him, of course, an immense accession of cares and anxieties. He was virtually the leader of the House of Commons; and, though his exquisite tact and talent secured to himself personally the applause and admiration of all parties, the government to which he belonged was beginning to disclose symptoms of disunion and disorganization at a time when public affairs were becoming every hour more and more involved—our domestic and foreign policy perplexed—the latter almost inextricably—every day assuming a new and different aspect, through the operation of the great events incessantly transpiring on the Continent. The national confidence began rapidly to ebb away from the ministers, and symptoms of a most startling character appeared in different parts of the country. The House of Commons—the pulse of

popular feeling—began to beat irregularly—how intermitting—now with feverish strength and rapidity—clearly indicating that the circulation was disordered. Nearly the whole of the newspapers turned against the ministry, and assailed them with the bitterest and foulest obloquy. Night after night poor Mr. Stafford talked himself hoarse, feeling that he was the acknowledged mouthpiece of the ministry, but in vain. Ministers were perpetually left in miserable minorities; they were beaten at every point. Their ranks presented the appearance of a straggling disbanded army; those of the Opposition hung together like a shipwrecked crew clinging to the last fragments of their wreck. Can the consequence be wondered at?

At length came the budget, word of awful omen to many a quaking ministry! In vain were the splendid powers of Mr. Stafford put into requisition. In vain did his masterly mind fling light and order over his sombrous chaotic subject, and simplify and make clear to the whole country, the, till then, dreary jargon and mysticism of financial technicalities. In vain, in vain did he display the sweetness of Cicero, the thunder of Demosthenes. The leader of the Opposition rose, and coolly turned all he had said into ridicule; one of his squad then started to his feet, and made out poor Mr. Stafford to be a sort of ministerial swindler; and the rest cunningly gave the cue to the country, and raised up in every quarter clamorous dissatisfaction. Poor Stafford began to look haggard and wasted; and the papers said he stalked into the House, night after night, like a spectre. The hour of the ministry was come. They were beaten on the first item, in the committee of supply. Mr. Stafford resigned in disgust and indignation; and that broke up the government.

I saw him the morning after he had formally tendered his resignation, and given up the papers, &c. of office. He was pitifully emaciated. The fire of

his eye was quenched, his sonorous voice broken. I could scarce repress a tear as I gazed at his sallow haggard features, and his languid limbs drawn together on his library sofa.

"Doctor—my friend! This frightful session has killed me, I'm afraid!" said he. "I feel equally wasted in body and mind. I loathe life—every thing!"

"I don't think you've been fairly dealt with! You've been crippled—shackled—"

"Yes—cursed—cursed—cursed in my colleagues," he interrupted me, with eager bitterness; "it is *their* execrable little-mindedness and bigotry that have concentrated on us the hatred of the nation. As for myself, I am sacrificed, and to no purpose. I feel I cannot long survive it; for I am withered, root and branch—withered!"

"Be persuaded, Mr. Stafford," said I, gently, "to withdraw for a while, and recruit."

"Oh, ay, ay—any whither—any whither—as far off as possible from London—that's all. God pity the man that holds office in these times. The talents of half the angels in heaven wouldn't avail him! Doctor, I rave. Forgive me—I'm in a morbid—nay, almost rabid mood of mind. Foiled at every point—others robbing me of the credit of my labours—sneered at by fools—trampled on by the aristocracy—oh tut, tut, tut—fie on it all!" \* \*

"Have you seen the morning papers, Mr. Stafford?"

"Not I, indeed. Sick of their cant—lies—tergiversation—scurrility. I've laid an embargo on them all. I won't let one come to my house for a fortnight. 'Tis adding fuel to the fire that is consuming me."

"Ah, but they represent the nation as calling loudly for your reinstatement in office."

"Faugh—let it call! Let them lie on! I'm done with them—for the present."

The servant brought up the cards of several of his late colleagues. "Not at home, sirrah!—Harkee—

ill—ill," thundered his master. I sat with him nearly an hour longer. Oh, what gall and bitterness tintured every word he uttered! How his chafed and fretted spirit spurned at sympathy, and despised—even acquiescence! He complained heavily of perfidy and ingratitude on the part of many members of the House of Commons; and expressed his solemn determination—should he ever return to power—to visit them with his signal vengeance. His eyes flashed fire as he recounted the instance of one well-known individual, whom he had paid heavily beforehand for his vote, by a sinecure, and by whom he was after all unblushingly "jockeyed," on the score of the salary being a few pounds per annum less than had been calculated on! "Oh, believe me," he continued, "of all knavish trafficking, there is none like your political trafficking; of all swindlers, your political swindler is the vilest." Before I next saw him, the new ministry had been named, some of the leading members of which were among Mr. Stafford's bitterest and most contemptuous enemies, and had spontaneously pledged themselves to act diametrically opposite to the policy he had adopted. This news was too much for him; and, full of unutterable fury and chagrin, he hastily left town, and, with all his family, betook himself, for an indefinite period, to a distant part of England. I devoutly hoped that he had now had his surfeit of politics, and would henceforth seek repose in the domestic circle. Lady Emma participated anxiously in that wish: she doted on her husband more fondly than ever; and her faded beauty touchingly told with what deep devotion she had identified herself with her husband's interests.

As I am not writing a *life* of Mr. Stafford, I must leap over a further interval of twelve anxious and agitating years. He returned to parliament, and for several sessions shone brilliantly as the leader of the Opposition. Being freed from the trammels of office,

his spirits assumed their wonted elasticity, and his health became firmer than it had been for years—so that there was little necessity for my visiting him on any other footing than that of friendship. A close observer could not fail to detect the *system* of Mr. Stafford's parliamentary tactics. He subordinated every thing to accomplish the great purpose of his life. He took every possible opportunity, in eloquent and brilliant speeches, of familiarizing parliament, and the country at large, with his own principles; dexterously contrasting with them the narrow and inconsistent policy of his opponents. He felt that he was daily increasing the number of his partisans both in and out of the House,—and securing a prospect of his speedy return to permanent power. I one day mentioned this feature, and told him I admired the way in which he gradually *insinuated* himself into the confidence of the country.

"Aha, doctor!" he replied briskly; "to borrow one of your own terms—I'm *vaccinating* the nation!"

*July —, 18—.*—The star of Stafford again lord of the ascendant! This day have the seals of the — office been intrusted to my gifted friend Stafford, amid the thunders of the Commons, and the universal gratulations of the country. He is virtually the leader of the cabinet, and has it "all his own way" with the House. Every appearance he makes there is the signal for a perfect tempest of applause—with, however, a few lightning-gleams of inveterate hostility. His course is full of dazzling dangers. There are breakers ahead—he must tack about incessantly amid shoals and quicksands. God help him, and give him calmness and self-possession—or he is lost!

I suppose there will be no getting near him, at least to such an insignificant person as myself—unless he should unhappily require my professional services. How my heart beats when I hear it said

in society, that he seems to feel most acutely the attacks incessantly made on him—and appears ill every day! Poor Stafford! I wonder how Lady Emma bears all this!

I hear every where that a tremendous opposition is organizing, countenanced in very high quarters, and that he will have hard work to maintain his ground. He is paramount at present, and laughs his enemies to scorn! His name, coupled with almost idolatrous expressions of homage, is in every one's mouth of the *varium et mutabile semper* race. His pictures are in every shop-window; dinners are given him every week; addresses forwarded from all parts of the country; the freedom of large cities and corporations voted him; in short, there is scarce any thing said or done in public but what Mr. Stafford's name is coupled with it. \* \* \*

*March* —, 18—.—Poor Stafford, baited incessantly in the House, night after night. Can he stand? everybody is asking. He has commenced the session swimmingly—as the phrase is. Lady Emma, whom I accidentally met to-day at the house of a patient—herself full of feverish excitement—gives me a sad account of Mr. Stafford. Restless nights—incessant sleep-talking—continual indisposition—loss of appetite! Oh, the pleasures of politics, the sweets of ambition!

*Saturday*.—A strange hint in one of the papers to-day about Mr. Stafford's unaccountable freaks in the House, and treatment of various members. What can it mean? A fearful suspicion glanced across my mind—Heaven grant it may be groundless—on coupling with this dark newspaper hint an occurrence which took place some short time ago. It was this. Lady Amelia ——— was suddenly taken ill at a ball given by the Duke of ———, and I was called in to attend her. She had swooned in the midst of the dance, and continued hysterical for some time after her removal home. I asked her what had

occasioned it all—and she told me that she happened to be passing, in the dance, a part of the room where Mr. Stafford stood, who had looked in for a few minutes to speak to the Marquis of ——. “He was standing in a thoughtful attitude,” she continued, “and somehow or another I attracted his attention in passing, and he gave me one of the most fiendish scowls, accompanied with a frightful glare of the eye, I ever encountered. It passed from his face in an instant, and was succeeded by a smile, as he nodded repeatedly to persons who saluted him. The look he gave me haunted me, and, added to the exhaustion I felt from the heat of the room, occasioned my swooning.” Though I felt faint at heart while listening to her, I laughed it off, and said it must have been fancy. “No, no, doctor, it was not,” she replied, “for the Marchioness of — saw it too, and no later than this very morning, when she called, asked me if I had affronted Mr. Stafford.”

Could it be so? Was this “look” really a transient ghastly out-flashing of insanity? Was his great mind beginning to stagger under the mighty burden it bore? The thought agitated me beyond measure. When I coupled the incident in question with the mysterious hint in the daily print, my fears were awfully corroborated. I resolved to call upon Mr. Stafford that very evening. I was at his house about eight o’clock, but found he had left a little while before, for Windsor. The next morning, however—Sunday—his servant brought me word that Mr. Stafford would be glad to see me between eight and ten o’clock in the evening.

Thither, therefore, I repaired, about half-past eight. On sending up my name, his private secretary came down stairs, and conducted me to the minister’s library—a spacious and richly furnished room. Statues stood in the window-places, and busts of British statesmen in the four corners. The sides were lined with book-shelves, filled with elegantly bound volumes; and a large table in the middle of the room



was covered with tape-tied packets, opened and unopened letters, &c. &c. &c. A large bronze lamp was suspended from the ceiling, and threw a peculiarly rich and mellow light over the whole—and especially the figure of Mr. Stafford, who, in his long crimson silk dressing-gown, was walking rapidly to and fro, with his arms folded on his breast. The first glance showed me that he was labouring under high excitement. His face was pale, and his brilliant eyes glanced restlessly from beneath his intensely knit brows.

"My dear doctor—an age since I saw you!—Here I am—overwhelmed, you see, as usual!" said he, cordially taking me by the hand, and leading me to a seat.—"My dear sir, you give yourself no rest—you are actually—you are *rapidly* destroying yourself!" said I, after he had, in his own brief, energetic, and pointed language, described a train of symptoms bordering on those of brain-fever. He had, unknown to any one, latterly taken to opium, which he swallowed by stealth, in large quantities, on retiring to bed; and I need hardly say how that of itself was sufficient to derange the functions both of body and mind. He had lost his appetite, and felt consciously sinking every day into a state of the utmost languor and exhaustion—so much so, that he was reluctant often to rise and dress, or go out. His temper, he said, began to fail him, and he grew fretful and irritable with everybody, and on every occasion. "Doctor, doctor, I don't know whether you'll understand me or not—but every thing GLARES at me!" said he. "Every object grows suddenly invested with personality—animation—I can't bear to look at them!—I am oppressed—I breathe a rarified atmosphere!"—"Your nervous system is disturbed, Mr. Stafford."—"I live in a dim dream—with only occasional intervals of real consciousness. Every thing is false and exaggerated about me. I see, feel, think, through a magnifying medium—in a word, I'm in a strange, unaccountable state.

"Can you wonder at it—even if it were worse?" said I, expostulating vehemently with him on his incessant, unmitigating application to public business. "Believe me," I concluded, with energy, "you must lie by, or be laid by."—"Ah—good, that—tease! But what's to be done? Must I resign? Must public business stand still in the middle of the session? I've made my bed, and must lie on it."

I really was at a loss what to say. He could not bear "preaching" or "prosing" or any thing approaching to it." I suffered him to go on as he would, detailing more and more symptoms like those above mentioned—clearly enough disclosing to my reluctant eyes, reason holding her reins loosely, unsteadily!

"I can't account for it, doctor—but I feel sudden fits of wildness sometimes—but for a moment—a second!—Oh, my Creator! I hope all is yet sound *here, here!*" said he, pressing his hand against his forehead. He rose and walked rapidly to and fro. "Excuse me, doctor, I *cannot* sit still!" said he. \* \* \* "Have I not enough to upset me?—Only listen to a tithe of my troubles, now!—After paying almost servile court to a parcel of parliamentary puppies, ever since the commencement of the session, to secure their votes on the — bill—having the boobies here to dine with me, and then dining with them, week after week, sitting down gayly with fellows whom I utterly, unutterably despise—every one of the pack suddenly turned tail on me—stole, stole, stole away—every one—and left me in a ridiculous minority of 43!"—I said it was a sample of the annoyances inseparable from office. "Ay, ay, ay!" he replied, with impetuous bitterness, increasing the pace at which he was walking. "Why—*why* is it, that public men have no principle—no feeling—no gratitude—no sympathy?" he paused. I said, mildly, that I hoped the throng of the session was nearly got through, that his embarrassments would diminish, and he would have some leisure on his hands.

"Oh no, no, no!—my difficulties and perplexities increase and thicken on every side!—Great heavens! how are we to get on?—All the motions of government are impeded—we are hemmed in—blocked up—on every side—the state-vessel is surrounded with closing, crashing icebergs!—I think I must quit the helm!—Look here, for instance. After ransacking all the arts and resources of diplomacy, I had, with infinite difficulty, succeeded in devising a scheme for adjusting our — differences. Several of the continental powers have acquiesced—all was going on well—when this very morning comes a courier to Downing-street, bearing a civil hint from the Austrian cabinet, that, if I persevered with my project, such a procedure will be considered equivalent to a declaration of war!—So *there* we are at a dead stand!—'Tis all that execrable Metternich! Subtle devil! *He's* at the bottom of all the disturbances in Europe!—Again, here at home, we are all on our backs!—I stand pledged to the — bill. I will, and must go through with it. My consistency, popularity, place—all are at stake! I'm *bound* to carry it—and only yesterday the —, and —, and — families—'gad!—half the Upper House—have given me to understand I must give up them, or the — bill!—And then we are all at daggers-drawn among ourselves—a cabinet-council like a cock-pit, — and — eternally bickering!—And again—last night his majesty behaved with marked coolness and hauteur; and while sipping his claret, told me, with stern *sang-froid*, that his consent to the — bill was "utterly out of the question." Must throw overboard the —, a measure that I have more at heart than any other!—It is whispered that — is determined to draw me into a duel; and, as if all this were not enough, I am perpetually receiving threats of assassination; and, in fact, a bullet hissed close past my hat the other day while on horseback, on my way to —! I can't make the thing public—'tis impossible

and perhaps the very next hour I move out, I may be shot through the heart!—Oh God, *what* is to become of me? Would to heaven I had refused the seals of the — office!—doctor, do you think—the nonsense of medicine apart—do you think you can do any thing for me? Any thing to quiet the system—to cool the brain? Would bleeding do? Bathing? What?—But mind—I've not much time for physic—I'm to open the — question to-morrow night; and then every hour to dictate fifteen or twenty letters! In a word—”

“Colonel Lord —, sir,” said the servant, appearing at the door.

“Ah, execrable coxcomb!” he muttered to me. “I know what he is come about—he has badgered me incessantly for the last six weeks!—I won't see him—not at home!” to the servant. He paused. “Stay, sirrah!—beg the colonel to walk up stairs.” Then to me, “The man can command his two brothers' votes—I must have them to-morrow night.—Doctor, we must part,” hearing approaching footsteps. “I've been raving like a madman, I fear—not a word to any one breathing!—Ah, colonel, good evening—good evening!” said he, with a gayety and briskness of tone and manner that utterly confounded me—walking and meeting his visiter half-way, and shaking him by the hands. Poor Stafford! I returned to my own quiet home, and devoutly thanked God, who had shut *me* out from such splendid misery, as I witnessed in the Right Honourable Charles Stafford!

*Tuesday.*—Poor Stafford spoke splendidly in the House last night, for upwards of three hours; and at the bottom of the reported speech, a note was added, informing the reader, that “Mr. Stafford was looking better than they had seen him for some months, and seemed to enjoy excellent spirits.” How little did he who penned that note suspect

the true state of matters—that Mr. Stafford owed his “better looks” and “excellent spirits” to an intoxicating draught of raw brandy, which alone enabled him to face the House! I read his speech with agonizing interest; it was full of flashing fancy, and powerful argumentative eloquence, and breathed throughout a buoyant elastic spirit, which nothing seemed capable of overpowering or depressing. But Mr. Stafford might have saved his trouble and anxiety—for he was worsted—and his bill lost by an overwhelming majority! Oh! could his relentless opponents have seen but a glimpse of what I had seen, they would have spared their noble victim the sneers and railleries with which they pelted him throughout the evening.

*Friday.*—I this afternoon had an opportunity of conversing confidentially with Mr. Stafford’s private secretary, who corroborated my worst fears, by communicating his own, and their reasons, amounting to infallible evidence, that Mr. Stafford was beginning to give forth scintillations of *madness*. He would sometimes totally lose his recollection of what he had done during the day, and dictate three answers to the same letter. He would, at the public office, sometimes enter into a strain of conversation with his astounded underlings, so absurd and imprudent disclosing the profoundest secrets of state, as must have inevitably and instantly ruined him, had he not been surrounded by those who were personally attached to him. Mr. — communicated various other little symptoms of the same kind. Mr. Stafford was once on his way down to the House, in his dressing-gown, and could be persuaded with the utmost difficulty only to return and change it. He would sometimes go down to his country-house, and receive his lady and children with such an extravagant—such a frantic display of spirit and gayety, as at first delighted, then surprised, and finally alarmed

Lady Emma into a horrid suspicion of the real state of her husband's mind.

I was surprised early one morning by his coachman's calling at my house, and desiring to see me alone: and when he was shown into my presence, with a flurried manner, many apologies for his "boldness," and entreaties—somewhat Hibernian, to be sure, in the wording—that I "would *take no notice whatever* of what he said"—he told me that his master's conduct had latterly been "very odd and queer-like." That on getting into his carriage, on his return from the House, Mr. Stafford would direct him to drive five or six miles into the country, at the top of his speed—then back again—then to some distant part of London, without once alighting, and with no apparent object; so that it was sometimes five or six, or even seven o'clock in the morning before they got home! "Last night, sir," he added, "master did som'mut uncommon 'stroordinary—he told me to drive to Greenwich—and when I gets there, he bids me pull up at the —, and get him a draught of ale—and then he drinks a sup, and tells me and John to finish it—and then turn the horses' heads back again for town!"—I gave the man half a guinea, and solemnly enjoined him to keep what he had told me a profound secret.

What was to be done? What steps could we take? How deal with such a public man as Mr. Stafford? I felt myself in a fearful dilemma. Should I communicate candidly with Lady Emma? I thought it better, on the whole, to wait a little longer—and was delighted to find, that as public business slackened a little, and Mr. Stafford carried several favourite measures very successfully, and with comparatively little effort, he intermitted his attention to business, and was persuaded into spending the recess at the house of one of his relatives, a score or two miles from town—whose enchanting house and grounds, and magnificent hospitalities, served to occupy Mr.

Stafford's mind with bustling and pleasurable thoughts. Such a fortnight's interval did wonders for him. Lady Emma, whom I had requested to write frequently to me about him, represented things more and more cheerfully in every succeeding letter—saying, that the “distressing *flightiness*,” which Mr. Stafford had occasionally evinced in town, had totally disappeared; that everybody at — House was astonished at the elasticity and joyousness of Mr. Stafford's spirits, and the energy, almost amounting to enthusiasm, with which he entered into the glittering gayeties and festivities that were going on around him. “He was the life and soul of the party.” He seemed determined to banish business from his thoughts, at least for a while; and when a chance allusion was made to it, would put it off gayly with “sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.” All this filled me with consolation. I dismissed the apprehensions which had latterly harassed my mind concerning him, and heartily thanked God that Mr. Stafford's splendid powers seemed likely to be yet long spared to the country—that the hovering fiend was beaten off from his victim—might it be for ever!

The House at length resumed; Mr. Stafford returned to town, and all his weighty cares again gathered around him. Hardly a few days had elapsed, before he delivered one of the longest, calmest, most argumentative speeches which had ever fallen from him. Indeed it began to be commonly remarked, that all he said in the House wore a matter-of-fact business-like air, which nobody could have expected from him. All this was encouraging. The measure which he brought forward in the speech last alluded to was hotly contested, inch by inch, in the House, and at last, contrary even to his own expectations, carried, though by an inconsiderable majority. All his friends congratulated him on his triumph.

“Yes, I HAVE triumphed at last,” he said, emphatically, as he left the House. He went home, late at

night, and alarmed—confounded his domestics by calling them all up, and—it is lamentable to have to record such things of such a man—insisting on their *illuminating* the house—candles in every window—in front and behind! It was fortunate that Lady Emma and her family had not yet returned from — House, to witness this unequivocal indication of returning insanity. He himself personally assisted at the ridiculous task of lighting the candles, and putting them in the windows; and when it was completed, actually harangued the assembled servants on the signal triumph he and the country had obtained that night in the House of Commons, and concluded by ordering them to extinguish the lights, and adjourn to the kitchen to supper, when he would presently join them, and give them a dozen of wine! He was as good as his word; yes, Mr. Stafford sat at the head of his confounded servants—few in number, on account of the family's absence, and engaged in the most uproarious hilarity! Fortunately, most fortunately, his conduct was unhesitatingly attributed to intoxication—in which condition he was really carried to bed at an advanced hour in the morning, by those whom nothing but their bashful fears had saved from being similarly overcome by the wine they had been drinking. All this was told me by the coachman, who had communicated with me formerly—and with tears, for he was an old and faithful servant. He assiduously kept up among his fellow-servants the notion that their master's drunkenness was the cause of his extraordinary behaviour.

I called on him the day after, and found him sitting in his library, dictating to his secretary, whom he directed to withdraw as soon as I entered. He then drew his chair close to mine, and burst into tears.

“Doctor, would you believe it,” said he, “I was horridly drunk last night—I can’t imagine how—and am sure I did something or other very absurd among the servants. I dare not, of course, *ask* any of them



—and am positively ashamed to look even my valet in the face!”

“Poh, poh—*semel insanivimus omnes*,” I stammered, attempting to smile—scarce knowing what to say.

“Don’t—don’t desert me, doctor!”—he sobbed, clasping my hand, and looking sorrowfully in my face; “don’t *you* desert me, my tried friend. Everybody is forsaking me!—the king hates me—the Commons despise me—the people would have my blood, if they dared!—And yet why?—What have I done?—God knows, I have done every thing for the best—indeed, indeed I have!”—I continued grasping his hand in silence.

“There’s a terrible plot hatching against me!—Hush!” He rose, and bolted the door. “Did you see that fellow whom I ordered out on your entrance?”—naming his private secretary. “Well, that infamous fellow thinks he is to succeed me in my office, and has actually gained over the king and several of the aristocracy to his interest!”

“Nonsense—nonsense—stuff!—You have *wine* in your head, Mr. Stafford,” said I, angrily, trying to choke down my emotions.

“No, sir—sober enough now, Doctor——. I’ll tell you what (albeit unused to the melting mood, has thus overcome me,—Lady Emma favours the scoundrel! They correspond! My children even are gained over!—But Emma, my wife, my love, who could have thought it!” \* \* \* I succeeded in calming him, and he began to converse on different subjects, although the fiend was manifest again! “Doctor ——, I’ll intrust you with a secret—a state secret! You must know that I have long entertained the idea of uniting all the European states into one vast republic, and have at last arranged a scheme which will, I think, be unhesitatingly adopted. I have written to Prince —— on the subject, and expect his answer soon! Isn’t it a grand thought?”

I assented, of course. "It will emblazon my name in the annals of eternity, beyond all Roman and all Grecian fame," he continued, waving his hand oratorically; "but I've been—yes, yes—premature!—My secret is safe with *you*, Doctor ——?"

"Oh certainly," I replied, with a melancholy air, uttering a deep sigh.

"But now to business. I'll tell you why I've sent for you." I had called unasked, as the reader will recollect. "I'll tell you," he continued, taking my hand affectionately; "Doctor ——, I have known you now for many years, ever since we were at Cambridge together," (my heart ached at the recollection,) "and we have been good friends ever since. I have noticed that you have never asked a favour from me since I knew you. Every one else has teased me—but I have never had a request preferred me from you, my dear friend." He burst into tears, mine very nearly overflowing. There was no longer any doubt that Mr. Stafford—the great, the gifted Mr. Stafford, was sitting before me in a state of idiotcy!—of MADNESS! I felt faint and sick as he proceeded.—"Well! I thank God I have it now in my power to reward you—to offer you something that will fully show the love I bear you, and my unlimited confidence in your talents and integrity. I have determined to recall our ambassador at the court of ——, and shall supply his place"—he looked at me with a good-natured smile—"by my friend Dr. ——!" He leaned back in his chair, and eyed me with a triumphant, a gratified air, evidently preparing himself to be overwhelmed with my thanks. In one instant, however, "a change came o'er the aspect of his dream." His features grew suddenly disturbed, now flushed, now pale; his manner grew restless and embarrassed, and I felt convinced that a lucid interval had occurred, that a consciousness of his having been either saying or doing something very absurd had that instant flashed across his mind. "Ah,

I see, Doctor ——!" he resumed, in an altered tone, speaking hesitatingly, while a vivid glance shot from his eye into my very soul, as though he would see whether I had detected the process of thought which had passed through his mind; "you look surprised—ha, ha!—and well you may! But now I'll explain the riddle. You must know that Lord —— is expecting to be our new ambassador, and in fact I *must* offer it him; but—but—I wish to pique him ~~into~~ declining it, when I'll take offence—by—by telling him—hinting carelessly, that one of my friends had the prior refusal of it!"

Did not the promptitude and plausibility of this pretext savour of madness? He hinted soon after that he had much business in hand, and I withdrew. I fell back in my carriage, and resigned myself to bitter and agonizing reflections on the scene I had just quitted. What was to be done? Mr. Stafford, by some extravagant act, might commit himself frightfully with public affairs.

Lady Emma, painful as the task was, must be written to. Measures must now be had recourse to. The case admitted of no further doubt, Yes—this great man must be put into constraint, and that immediately. In the tumult of my thoughts, I scarce knew what to decide on; but at last I ordered the man to drive to the houses of Sir ——, and Dr. ——, to consult with them on the proper course to be pursued.

\* \* \* \* \*

Oh, God!—Oh, horror!—Oh, my unhappy soul!—Despair! Hark—what do I hear?—Do I hear aright—

\* \* \* \* \*

Have I **SEEN** aright—or is it all a dream?—Shall I wake to-morrow, and find it false?

## CHAPTER II

## A SLIGHT COLD—RICH AND POOR—GRAVE DOINGS.

*A Slight Cold.*

CONSIDER "a slight cold" to be in the nature of a chill, caught by a sudden contact with your grave; or as occasioned by the damp finger of Death laid upon you, as it were, to mark you for HIS, in passing to the more immediate object of his commission. Let this be called croaking, and laughed at as such, by those who are "awearied of the painful round of life," and are on the lookout for their dismissal from it; but be learned off by heart, and remembered as having the force and truth of gospel, by all those who would "measure out their span upon the earth," and are conscious of any constitutional flaw or feebleness; who are distinguished by any such tendency deathward as long necks—narrow, chicken-chests—very fair complexions—requisite sympathy with atmospheric variations; or, in short, exhibit any symptoms of an asthmatic or consumptive character, IF they choose to—NEGLECT A SLIGHT COLD.

Let not those complain of being bitten by a reptile, which they have cherished to maturity in their very bosoms, when they might have crushed it in the egg! Now, if we call "a slight cold" the egg,\* and pleurisy—inflammation of the lungs—asthma—CONSUMPTION, the venomous reptile—the matter will be no more than correctly figured. There are many ways in which this "egg" may be deposited and hatched.

\* *Omnium prope quibus affligimur morborum origo et quasi semen,* says an intelligent medical writer of the last century.

Going suddenly, slightly clad, from a heated into a cold atmosphere, especially if you can contrive to be in a state of perspiration; sitting or standing in a *draught*, however slight: it is the breath of Death, reader, and laden with the vapours of the grave! Lying in damp beds—for there his cold arms shall embrace you; continuing in wet clothing, and neglecting wet feet—these, and a hundred others, are some of the ways in which you may slowly, imperceptibly, but surely, cherish the creature, that shall at last creep inextricably inwards, and lie coiled about your very vitals. Once more, again—again—again—I would say, ATTEND to this, all ye who think it a small matter to—NEGLECT A SLIGHT COLD!

So many painful, I may say dreadful, illustrations of the truth of the above remarks are strewn over the pages of my Diary, that I scarce know which of them to select. The following melancholy “instance” will, I hope, prove as impressive as I think it interesting.

Captain C—— had served in the Peninsular campaigns with distinguished merit; and on the return of the British army, sold out, and determined to enjoy in private life an ample fortune bequeathed him by a distant relative. At the period I am speaking of, he was in his twenty-ninth or thirtieth year; and in person one of the very finest men I ever saw in my life. There was an air of ease and frankness about his demeanour, dashed with a little pensiveness which captivated everybody with whom he conversed—but the ladies especially. It seemed the natural effect produced on a bold but feeling heart by frequent scenes of sorrow. Is not such a one formed to win over the heart of woman? Indeed it seemed so—for at the period I am speaking of, our English ladies were absolutely infatuated about the military; and a man who had otherwise but little chance had only to appear in regimentals to turn the scale in his favour. One would have thought the

race of soldiery was about to become suddenly extinct; for in almost every third marriage that took place within two years of the magnificent event at Waterloo—whether rich or poor, high or low—a *red coat* was sure to be the “principal performer.” Let the reader then, being apprized of this influenza—for what else was it—set before his imagination the tall commanding figure of Captain C—, his frank and noble bearing—his excellent family—his fortune, upwards of four thousand a-year—and calculate the chances in his favour! I met him several times in private society during his stay in town, and have his image vividly in my eye as he appeared on the last evening we met. He wore a blue coat, white waistcoat, and an ample black neckkerchief. His hair was very light, and disposed with natural grace over a remarkably fine forehead, the left corner of which bore the mark of a slight sabre-cut. His eye, bright hazel—clear and full—which you would in your own mind instantly compare to that of

“Mars—to threaten and command,”

was capable of an expression of the most winning and soul-subduing tenderness. Much more might I say in his praise, and truly—but that I have a melancholy end in view. Suffice it to add, that wherever he moved, he seemed the sun of the social circle, gazed on by many a soft starlike eye, with trembling rapture—the envied object of

“Nods, becks, and wreathed smiles”

from all that was fair and beautiful!

He could not remain long disengaged. Intelligence soon found its way to town of his having formed an attachment to Miss Ellen —, a wealthy and beautiful northern heiress, whose heart soon surrendered to its skilful assailant. Everybody was pleased with the match, and pronounced it suitable in all respects. I had an opportunity of seeing Captain

C—— and Miss —— together at an evening party in London; for the young lady's family spent the season in town, and were, of course, attended by the captain, who took up his quarters in —— street. A handsome couple they looked!

This was nearly twelve months after their engagement; and most of the preliminaries had been settled on both sides, and the event was fixed to take place within a fortnight of Miss —— and family's return to ——shire. The last day of their stay in town, they formed a large and gay water-party, and proceeded up the river a little beyond Richmond, in a beautiful open boat belonging to Lord ——, a cousin of the captain's. It was rather late before their return; and long ere their arrival at Westminster stairs, the wind and rain combined against the party, and assailed them with a fury against which their awning formed but an insufficient protection. Captain C—— had taken an oar for the last few miles; and as they had to pull against a strong tide, his task was not a trifling one. When he resigned his oar, he was in a perfect bath of perspiration: but he drew on his coat, and resumed the seat he had formerly occupied beside Miss ——, at the back of the boat. The awning unfortunately got rent immediately behind where they sat; and what with the splashing of the water on his back, and the squally gusts of wind which incessantly burst upon them, Captain C—— got thoroughly wet and chilled. Miss —— grew uneasy about him, but he laughed off her apprehensions, assuring her that they were groundless, and that he was "too old a soldier" to suffer from such a trifling thing as a little "wind and wet." On their leaving the boat, he insisted on accompanying them home to —— Square, and staid there upwards of an hour, busily conversing with them about their departure on the morrow. While there he took a glass or two of wine, but did not change his clothes. On returning to his lodgings, he was too busily and pleasantly

occupied with thoughts about his approaching nuptials, to advert to the necessity of using more precautions against cold, before retiring to bed. He sat down in his dressing-room, without ordering a fire to be lit, and wrote two or three letters; after which he got into bed. Now, how easy would it have been for Captain C—— to obviate any possible ill consequences, by simply ringing for warm water to put his feet in, and a basin of gruel, or posset? He did not do either of these, however; thinking it would be time enough to "cry out when he was hurt." In the morning he rose, and, though a little indisposed, immediately after breakfast drove to —— Square, to see off his lady and the family; for it had been arranged that he should remain behind a day or two, in order to complete a few purchases of jewelry, &c. &c., and then follow the party to ——shire. He rode on horseback beside their travelling carriage a few miles out of town; and then took his leave and returned. On his way home he called at my house, but finding me out, left his card, with a request that I would come and see him in the evening. About seven o'clock I was with him; I found him in his dressing-gown, in an easy-chair, drinking coffee. He looked rather dejected, and spoke in a desponding tone. He complained of the common symptoms of catarrh; and detailed to me the account which I have just laid before the reader. I remonstrated with him on his last night's imprudence.

"Ah Doctor ——, I wish to Heaven I had rowed on to Westminster, tired as I was!" said he. "Good God, what if I have caught my death of cold?—You cannot conceive how singular my sensations are!"

"That's generally the way with patients after the mischief's done," I replied with a smile. "But come, come! only take care of yourself, and matters are not at all desperate!"—"Heigh-ho!"—"Sighing like furnace," I continued, gayly, on hearing him utter several sighs in succession. "You sons of Mars



make bad hot work of it, both in love and war!"—again he sighed. "Why, what's the matter, captain?"

"Oh, nothing—nothing," he replied, languidly; "I suppose a cold generally depresses one's spirits—is it so? Is it a sign of a *severe*—"

"It is a sign that a certain person—"

"Pho, doctor, pho!"—said he, with an air of lassitude; "don't think me so childish!—I'll tell you candidly what has contributed to depress my spirits. For this last week or so, I've had a strange sort of conviction that—"

"Nonsense!—none of your nervous fancies—"

"Ah, but I *have*, doctor," he continued, scarce noticing the interruption; "I've felt a sort of presentiment—a foreboding that—that—that *something* or other would occur to prevent my marriage!"

"Oh, tush—tush!—every one has these low nervous fancies that is not accustomed to sickness."

"Well—it may be so—I hope it *may* be nothing more; but I seem to hear a voice whispering—or, at least, to be under an influence to that effect, that the cup will be dashed brimful from my opened lips—a fearful slip!—It seems as if my Ellen were too great a happiness for the Fates to allow one—"

"Too great a fiddlestick, captain!—so your schoolboy has a fearful apprehension that he cannot outlive the day of his final leaving school—too glorious and happy an era!"

"I know well what you allude to—but *mine* is a calm and rational apprehension—"

"Come, come, Captain C——, this is going too far. Raillery apart, however, I can fully enter into your feelings," I continued, perceiving his morbid excitement. "'Tis but human nature—to feel trepidation and apprehension when approaching some great crisis of one's existence. One is apt to give unfavourable *possibilities* an undue preponderance over *probabilities*: and it is easily to be accounted

for, on the known tendency we find within ourselves, on ordinary occasions, to shape events according to our *wishes*—and in our over-anxiety to guard against such—”

“Very metaphysical—very true, I dare say—”

“Well—to be matter-of-fact—I had all your feelings—perhaps greatly aggravated—at the time of my own marriage—”

“Eh!—indeed!—Had you really?” he inquired, eagerly, laying his hand on mine—continuing with an air of anxious curiosity. “Did you ever feel a sort of conviction that some mysterious agency was awaiting your approach towards the critical point, and when just within reach of your object, would suddenly smite you down?”

“Ay, to be sure,” said I, smiling, “a mere flutter of feeling—which you see others have besides your self; but that *you*—trained to confront danger—change—casualties of all sorts—that *you*—you, with your frame of Herculean build—”

“Well—a truce to your banter!” he interrupted me, somewhat impatiently; “I shouldn’t mind taking you ten to one that I don’t live to be married after all!”

“Come, this amounts to a symptom of your indisposition. You have got more fever on you than I thought—and you grow light-headed!—you must really get to bed, and in the morning all these fantasies will be gone.”

“Well—I hope in God they may! But they horribly oppress me! I own that latterly I’ve given in a little to *fatalism*.”

“This won’t do at all,” thought I, taking my pen in hand, and beginning to write a prescription.

“Are you thirsty at all? any *catching* in the side when you breathe? Any cough?” &c. &c., said I, asking him the usual routine of questions. I feared, from the symptoms he described, that he had caught a very severe, and possibly obstinate, cold—so I pre-

scribed active medicines. Among others, I recollect ordering him one-fourth of a grain of *tartarized antimony* every four hours, for the purpose of encouraging the insensible perspiration, and thereby determining the flow outwards. I then left him, promising to call about noon the next day, expressing my expectations of finding him perfectly recovered from his indisposition. I found him the following morning in bed, thoroughly under the influence of the medicines I had prescribed, and, in fact, much better in every respect. The whole surface of his body was damp and clammy to the touch, and he had exactly the proper sensation of nausea—both occasioned by the antimony. I contented myself with prescribing a repetition of the medicines.

“Well, captain, and what has become of your glorious forebodings of last night?” I inquired with a smile.

“Why—hem! I’m certainly not quite so desponding as I was last night; but still, the goal—the goal’s not reached yet! I’m not *well* yet—and even if I were, there’s a good fortnight’s space for contingencies!” \* \* I enjoined him to keep house for a day or two longer, and persevere with the medicines during that time, in order to his complete recovery, and he reluctantly acquiesced. He had written to inform Miss —, that owing to “a slight cold,” and his jeweller’s disappointing him about the trinkets he had promised, his stay in town would be prolonged two or three days. This circumstance had fretted and “worried” him a good deal.

One of the few enjoyments which my professional engagements permitted me was the opera, where I might for a while forget the plodding realities of life, and wander amid the magnificent regions of music and imagination. Few people, indeed, are so disposed to “make the most” of their time at the opera as medical men, to whom it is a sort of stolen pleasure; they sit or thorns, liable to be summoned out

Immediately—to exchange the bright scenes of fairy-land for the dreary bedside of sickness and death. I may not, perhaps, speak the feelings of my more phlegmatic brethren; but the considerations above named always make me sit listening to what is going on in a state of painful suspense and nervousness, which is aggravated by the slightest noise at the box-door—by the mere trying of the handle. On the evening of the day in question, a friend of my wife's had kindly allowed us the use of her box; and we were both sitting in our places at a musical banquet of unusual splendour, for it was Catalani's benefit. In looking round the house, during the interval between the opera and ballet, I happened to cast my eye towards the opposite box, at the moment it was entered by two gentlemen of very fashionable appearance. Fancying that the person of one of them was familiar to me, I raised my glass, my sight being rather short. I almost let it fall out of my hand with astonishment; for one of the gentlemen was—Captain C——! He whom I had that morning left ill in bed! Scarce believing that I had seen aright, I redirected my glass to the same spot, but there was no mistaking the stately and handsome person of my patient. There he stood, with the gay and even rather flustered air of one who has but recently adjourned thither from the wine-table! He seemed in very high spirits—his face flushed—chatting incessantly with his companion, and smiling and nodding frequently towards persons in various parts of the house. Concern and wonder at his rashness—his madness—in venturing out under such circumstances, kept me for some time breathless. Could I really be looking at my patient Captain C——? Him whom I had left in bed, under the influence of strong sudorifics? Who had faithfully promised that he would keep within doors for two or three days longer? What had induced him to transgress the order of his medical attendant—thus to put matters in a fair train

for verifying his own gloomy apprehensions expressed but the evening before?—Thoughts like these made me so uneasy, that, after failing to attract his eye, I resolved to go round to his box and remonstrate with him. After tapping at the door several times without being heard, on account of the loud tones in which they were laughing and talking, the door was opened.

“Good God! Doctor ——!” exclaimed Captain C——, in amazement, rising and giving me his hand. “Why, what on earth is the matter? What has brought you here? Is any thing wrong? Heavens! Have you heard any thing about Miss ——?” he continued, all in a breath, turning pale.

“Not a breath—not a word—but what has brought you here, captain? Are you stark staring mad?” I replied, as I continued grasping his hand, which was even then damp and clammy.

“Why—why—nothing particular,” he stammered, startled by my agitated manner. “What is there so very wonderful in my coming to the opera? Have I done wrong, eh?” after a pause.

“You have acted like a *madman*, Captain C——, in venturing even out of your bedroom, while under the influence of the medicines you were taking!”

“Oh, nonsense, my dear doctor—nonsense! What harm can there be? I felt infinitely better after you left me this morning;” and he proceeded to explain that his companion, to whom he introduced me, was Lieutenant ——, the brother of his intended bride; that he had that morning arrived in town from Portsmouth, had called on the captain, and, after drinking a glass or two of champaign, and forcing the captain to join him, had prevailed on him to accompany him to dinner at his hotel. Lieutenant —— overcame all his scruples—laughed at the idea of his “slight cold,” and said it would be “unkind to refuse the brother of Ellen!”—So, after dinner, they both adjourned to the opera. I nodded towards the door,

and we both left the box for a moment or two. "Why, Doctor —, you don't mean to say that I'm running any *real* risk?" he inquired, with some trepidation. "What *could* I do, you know, when the lieutenant there—only just returned from his cruise—Ellen's brother, you know—"

"Excuse me, Captain C—. Did you take the medicines I ordered regularly, up to the time of your going out?" I inquired, anxiously.

"To be sure I did—punctual as clockwork; and, egad! now I think of it," he added, eagerly, "I took a *double* dose of the powders, just before leaving my room, by way of making 'assurance doubly sure,' you know—ha, ha! Right, eh?"

"Have you perspired during the day, as usual?"

"Oh, profusely—profusely! Egad, I must have sweated all the fever out long ago, I think! I hadn't been in the open air half an hour, when my skin was as dry as yours—as dry as ever it was in my life. Nay, in fact, I felt rather chilled than otherwise."

"Allow me, captain—did you drink much at dinner?"

"Why—I own—I think I'd my share; these tars, you know—such *curst* soakers—"

"Let me feel your pulse," said I. It was full and thrilling, beating upwards of one hundred a minute. My looks, I suppose, alarmed him; for while I was feeling his pulse he grew very pale, and leaned against the box-door, saying, in a fainter tone than before, "I'm afraid I've done wrong in coming out. Your looks alarm me."

"You have certainly acted very—very imprudently, but I hope the mischief is not irremediable," said I, in as cheerful a tone as I could, for I saw that he was growing excessively agitated. "At all events, if you'll take my advice—"

"If!—there's no need of taunting one—"

"Well, then, you'll return home instantly, and muffle yourself up in your cloak as closely as possible."

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"I will! By-the-way, do you remember the bet I offered you," said he, with a sickly smile, wiping the perspiration from his forehead. "I—I—I fear you may take it, *and win!* Good God! what evil star is over me? Would to Heaven this Lieutenant — had never crossed my path!—I'll return home this instant, and do all you recommend; and, for God's sake, call early in the morning, whether I send for you or not!—By —! your looks and manner have nearly given me the brain-fever!"—I took my leave, promising to be with him early; and advising him to take a warm bath the moment it could be procured—to persevere with the powders—and lie in bed till I called. But, alas! alas! alas! the mischief had been DONE!

"Dear me, what a remarkably fine-looking man that Captain C—— is," said my wife, as soon as I had reseated myself beside her.

"He is a *dead* man, my love, if you like!" I replied, with a melancholy air. The little incident just recorded made me too sad to sit out the ballet, so we left very early, and I do not think we interchanged more than a word or two in going home; and *those* were, "Poor Miss —!"—"Poor Captain C——!" I do not pretend to say that even the rash conduct of Captain C——, and its probable consequences, could in every instance warrant such gloomy fears; but in his case I felt with himself a sort of *superstitious* apprehension, I knew not why.

I found him, on calling in the morning, exhibiting the incipient symptoms of inflammation of the lungs. He complained of increasing difficulty of breathing—a sense of painful oppression and constriction all over his chest, and a hard harassing cough, attended with excruciating pain. His pulse quivered and thrilled under the finger, like a tense harp-string after it has been *twanged*; the whole surface of his body was dry and heated; his face was flushed, and full of anxiety. A man of his robust constitution and plethoric habit

was one of the very worst subjects of inflammation ! I took from the arm, myself, a very large quantity of blood—which presented the usual appearance in such cases—and prescribed active lowering remedies. But neither these measures, nor the application of a large blister in the evening—when I again saw him—seemed to make any impression on the complaint, so I ordered him to be bled again. Poor Captain C—— ! From that morning he prepared himself for a fatal termination of his illness, and lamented, in the most passionate terms, that he had not acted up to my advice in time !

On returning home from my evening visit, I found an express, requiring my instant attendance on a lady of distinction in the country, an old patient of mine ; and was obliged to hurry off, without having time to do more than commit the care of Captain C——, and another equally urgent, to the care of Dr. D——, a friend of mine close by, imploring him to keep up the most active treatment with the captain—and promising him that I should return during the next day.—I was detained in the country for two days, during which I scarcely left Lady ——'s bedroom an instant ; and before I left for town she expired, under heartrending circumstances.—On returning to town, I found several urgent cases requiring my instant attention, and first and foremost that of poor Captain C——. Dr. D—— was out, so I hurried to my patient's bedside at once. It cannot injure any one, at this distance of time, to state plainly that the poor captain's case had been most deplorably mismanaged during my absence. It was owing to no fault of my friend Dr. D——, who had done his utmost, and had his own large practice to attend to. He was therefore under the necessity of committing the case to the more immediate superintendence of a young and inexperienced member of the profession, who, in his ignorance and timidity, threw aside the only chances for Captain C——'s life—repeated



blood-letting. Only *once* did Mr. — bleed him; and then took away about four ounces! Under the judicious management of Dr. D——, the inroads of the inflammation had been sensibly checked; but it rallied again, and made head against the languid resistance continued by the young apothecary; so that I arrived but in time to witness the closing scene.

He was absolutely withering under the fever; the difficulty with which he drew his breath amounted almost to suffocation. He had a dry hacking cough—the oppression of his chest was greater than ever; and what he expectorated was of a *black* colour! He was delirious, and did not know me. He fancied himself on the river, rowing—then endeavouring to protect Miss — from the inclemency of the weather; and the expressions of moving tenderness which he coupled with her name were heartbreaking. Then again he thought himself in —shire, superintending the alterations of his house, which was getting ready for their reception on their marriage. He mentioned *my* name, and said, “What a gloomy man that Dr. — is, Ellen! he keeps one stewing in bed for a week, if one has but a common cold!”

Letters were despatched into —shire, to acquaint his family, and that of Miss —, with the melancholy tidings of his dangerous illness. Several of his relations soon made their appearance; but as Miss —’s party did not go direct home, but staid a day or two on the way, I presume the letters reached — House long before their arrival, and were not seen by the family before poor Captain C—— had expired!

I called again on him in the evening. The first glance at his countenance sufficed to show me that he could not survive the night. I found that the cough and spitting had ceased suddenly; he felt no pain; his feeble varying pulse indicated that the powers of nature were rapidly sinking. His lips had assumed a fearfully livid hue, and were occasionally

retracted so as to show all his teeth; and his whole countenance was fallen. He was quite sensible, and aware that he was *dying*. He bore the intelligence with noble fortitude, saying, it was but the fruit of his own imprudence and folly. He several times ejaculated, "Oh, Ellen—Ellen—Ellen!" and shook his head feebly, with a woful, despairing look upwards, but without shedding a tear. He was past all display of active emotion!

"Shouldn't you call me a *suicide*, Doctor ——?" said he, mournfully, on seeing me sitting beside him.

"Oh, assuredly not! Dismiss such thoughts, dear captain, I beg! We are *all* in the hands of the Almighty, captain. It is *He* who orders our ends," said I, gently grasping his hand, which lay passive on the counterpane. "Well, I suppose it is so! His will be done!" he exclaimed, looking reverently upwards, and closing his eyes. I rose, and walked to the table on which stood his medicine, to see how much of it he had taken. *There* lay an unopened letter from Miss ——! It had arrived by that morning's post, and bore the postmark of the town at which they were making their halt by the way. Captain C——'s friends considered it better not to agitate him, by informing him of its arrival; for as Miss —— could not be apprized of his illness, it might be of a tenour to agitate and tantalize him. My heart ached to see it. I returned presently to my seat beside him.

"Doctor," he whispered, "will you be good enough to look for my white waistcoat—it is hanging in the dressing-room, and feel in the pocket for a little paper parcel?" I rose, did as he directed, and brought him what he asked for.

"Open it, and you'll see poor Ellen's wedding-ring and guard, which I purchased only a day or two ago, I wish to see them," said he, in a low but firm tone of voice. I removed the wool, and gazed at the glistening trinkets in silence, as did Captain C——,

"They will do to wed me to the *worm!*" said he, extending towards me the little finger of his left hand. The tears nearly blinding me—I did as he wished, but could not get them past the first joint.

"Ah, Ellen has a little finger," said he. A tear fell from my eye upon his hand. He looked at me for an instant with apparent surprise. "Never mind, doctor—that will do—I see they won't go farther. Now, let me die with them on; and when I am no more, let them be given to Ellen. I have wedded her in my heart—she is my wife!" He continued gazing fixedly at the finger on which the rings were.

"Of course, she cannot know of my illness?" looking at me. I shook my head.

"Good. 'Twill break her little heart, I'm afraid!" Those were the last words I ever heard him utter; for finding that my feelings were growing too excited, and that the captain seemed disposed to sleep, I rose and left the room, followed by Lieutenant —, who had been sitting at his friend's bedside all day long, and looked dreadfully pale and exhausted. "Doctor," said he, in a broken voice, as we stood together in the hall, "I have *murdered* my friend, and he thinks I have. He won't speak to me, nor look at me! He hasn't opened his lips to me once, though I've been at his bedside night and day. Yes," he continued, almost choking, "I've murdered him; and what is to become of my *sister?*" I made him no reply, for my heart was full.

In the morning I found Captain C—— *laid out*; for he had died about midnight.

Few scenes are fraught with more solemnity and awe, none more chilling to the heart, than the chamber of the recent dead. It is like the cold porch of eternity! The sepulchral silence, the dim light, the fearful order and repose of all around—a sick-room, as it were, suddenly changed into a charnel-house—the central object in the gloomy picture, the bed—the yellow effigy of him *that was*, looking coldly out from

the white unruffled sheets—the lips that must speak no more—the eyes that are shut for ever!

The features of Captain C—— were calm and composed; but to see that fine countenance surrounded with the close crimped cap, injuring its outline and proportions!—Here, reader, lay the victim OF A SLIGHT COLD!

### *Rich and Poor.*

A REMARKABLE and affecting juxtaposition of the two poles, so to speak, of human condition—affluence and poverty—rank and degradation—came under my notice during the early part of the year 181—. The dispensations of Providence are fearful levellers of the factitious distinctions among men! Little boots it to our common foe whether he pluck his prey from the downy satin-curtained couch, or the wretched pallet of a prison or a workhouse! The oppressive splendour of rank and riches, indeed!—what has it of solace or mitigation to him bidden to “turn his pale face to the wall”—to look his last on life, its toys and tinselries?

The Earl of ——’s old tormentor, the gout, had laid close siege to him during the early part of the winter of 181—, and inflicted on him agonies of unusual intensity and duration. It left him in a very low and poor state of health—his spirits utterly broken—and his temper soured and irritable, to an extent that was intolerable to those around him. The discussion of a political question, in the issue of which his interests were deeply involved, seduced him into an attendance at the House of Lords, long before he was in a fit state for removal even from his bedchamber; and the consequences of such a shattered invalid’s premature exposure to a bleak winter’s wind may be easily anticipated. He was laid again on a bed of suffering; and having, through some sudden pique,

dismissed his old family physician, his lordship was pleased to summon me to supply his place.

The Earl of — was celebrated for his enormous riches, and the more than oriental scale of luxury and magnificence on which his establishment was conducted. The slanderous world further gave him credit for a disposition of the most exquisite selfishness, which, added to his capricious and choleric humour, made him a very unenviable companion, even in health. What, then, must such a man be in sickness! I trembled at the task that was before me!—It was a bitter December evening on which I paid him my first visit. Nearly the whole of the gloomy secluded street in which his mansion was situated was covered with straw; and men were stationed about it to prevent noise in any shape. The ample knocker was muffled, and the bell unhung lest the noise of either should startle the aristocratical invalid. The instant my carriage, with its muffled roll, drew up, the hall-door sprung open as if by magic: for the watchful porter had orders to anticipate all comers, on pain of instant dismissal. Thick matting was laid over the hall-floor—double carpeting covered the staircases and landings, from the top to the bottom of the house—and all the door-edges were lined with list! How could sickness or death presume to enter, in spite of such precautions?

A servant, in large list-slippers, asked me, in a whisper, my name; and, on learning it, said the countess wished to have a few moments' interview with me before I was shown up to his lordship. I was therefore led into a magnificent apartment, where her ladyship, with two grown-up daughters, and a young man in the Guards' uniform, sat sipping coffee—for they had but just left the dining-room. The countess looked pale and dispirited. "Doctor —," said she, after a few words-of-course had been interchanged, "I'm afraid you'll have a trying task to manage his lordship! We are all worn out with

attending on him, and yet he says we neglect him! Nothing can please or satisfy him!—What do you imagine was the reason of his dismissing Dr. —? because he persisted in attributing the present seizure to his imprudent visit to the House!"

"Well, your ladyship knows I can but attempt to do my duty." At that instant the door was opened, and a sleek servant, all pampered and powdered, in a *sotto voce* tone, informed the countess that his lordship had been inquiring for me. "Oh, for God's sake, go—go immediately," said her ladyship, eagerly, "or we shall have no peace for a week to come!—I shall, perhaps, follow you in a few minutes!—But mind—please, not a breath about Dr. —'s leaving!" I bowed, and left the room. I followed the servant up the noble staircase,—vases and statues, with graceful lamps, at every landing,—and was presently ushered into the "Blue-beard" chamber. Oh, the sumptuous, the splendid air of every thing within it! Flowered, festooned satin window draperies—flowered satin bed-curtains, gathered together at the top by a golden eagle—flowered satin counterpane! Beautiful Brussels muffled the tread of your feet, and delicately carved chairs and couches solicited to repose!—The very chamber-lamps, glistening in soft radiance from a snowy-marble stand in the further corners of the room, were tasteful and elegant in the extreme. In short, grandeur and elegance seemed to outvie one another, both in the materials and disposition of every thing around me. I never saw any thing like it before, nor have I since. I never in my life sat in such a yielding luxurious chair as the one I was beckoned to beside the earl. There was, in a word, every thing to cheat a man into a belief that he belonged to a higher "order" than that of "poor humanity."

But for the lord—the owner of all this—my patient. Ay, there he lay, imbedded in down, amid snowy linen and figured satin—all that was visible of him

being his little sallow wrinkled visage, worn with illness, age, and fretfulness, peering curiously at me from the depths of his pillow—and his left hand, lying outside the bedclothes, holding a white embroidered handkerchief, with which he occasionally wiped his clammy features.

“U—u—gh!—U—u—gh!” he groaned, or rather gasped, as a sudden twinge of pain twisted and corrugated his features almost out of all resemblance to humanity—till they looked more like those of a strangled ape than the Right Honourable the Earl of ——. The paroxysm presently abated. “You’ve been—down stairs—more than—five minutes—I believe—Dr. —?” he commenced, in a petulant tone, pausing for breath between every two words—his features not yet recovered from their contortions. I bowed.

“I flatter myself—it was I—who sent—for you, Dr. —, and—not her ladyship,” he continued. I bowed again, and was going to explain, when he resumed—

“Ah! I see! Heard—the whole story—of Dr. —’s dismissal—ugh—ugh—eh!—May I—beg the favour—of hearing—her *ladyship’s* version—of the affair?”

“My lord, I heard nothing but the simple fact of Dr. —’s having ceased to attend your lordship—”

“Ah!—*ceased to attend!* Good!” he repeated, with a sneer.

“Will your lordship permit me to ask if you have much pain just now?” I inquired, anxious to terminate his splenetic display. I soon discovered that he was in the utmost peril; for there was every symptom of the gout’s having been driven from its old quarter, the extremities, to the vital organs—the stomach and bowels. One of the most startling symptoms was the sensation he described as resembling that of a platter of ice laid upon the pit of his stomach; and he complained also of increasing

nausea. Though not choosing to apprize him of the exact extent of his danger, I strove so to shape my questions and comments that he might infer his being in dangerous circumstances. He either did not, however, or would not, comprehend me. I told him that the remedies I should recommend—

“Ah—by-the-way,” said he, turning abruptly towards me, “it mustn’t be the execrable stuff that Dr. — half-poisoned me with! Gad, sir, it had a most diabolical stench—garlic was a pineapple to it—and here was I obliged to lie soaked in eau de Cologne, and half-stifed with musk. He did it on purpose; he had a spite against me!” I begged to be shown the medicines he complained of, and his valet brought me the half-emptied phial. I found my predecessor had been exhibiting *asafoetida* and musk—and could no longer doubt the coincidence of his view of the case and mine.

“I’m afraid, my lord,” said I, hesitatingly, “that I shall find myself compelled to continue the use of the medicines which Dr. — prescribed.”

“I’ll be — if you *do*, though—that’s all,” replied the earl, continuing to mutter indistinctly some insulting words about my “small acquaintance with the *pharmacopœia*.” I took no notice of it.

“Would your lordship,” said I, after a pause, “object to the use of camphor or ammonia?”\*

“I object to the use of every medicine but one; and that is, a taste of some potted boar’s flesh, which my nephew, I understand, has this morning sent from abroad.”

“My lord, it is utterly out of the question. Your lordship, it is my duty to inform you, is in extremely dangerous circumstances.”

\* His lordship, with whom, as possibly I should have earlier informed the reader, I had some little personal acquaintance before being called in professionally, had a tolerable knowledge of medicine; which will account for my mentioning what remedies I intended to exhibit. In fact, he insisted on knowing



"The d—l I am!" he exclaimed, with an incredulous smile. "Pho, pho! So Dr. —— said. According to him, I ought to have *resigned* about a week ago! Egad—but—but—what symptom of danger is there now?" he inquired, abruptly.

"Why, *one*—in fact, my lord, the *worst* is—the sensation of numbness at the pit of the stomach, which your lordship mentioned just now."

"Pho!—gone—gone—gone! A mere nervous sensation, I apprehend. I am freer from pain just now than I have been all along," his face changed a little. "Doctor—rather faint with talking—can I have a cordial? Pierre, get me some brandy!" he added, in a feeble voice. The valet looked at me—I nodded acquiescence, and he instantly brought the earl a wineglassful.

"Another—another—another," gasped the earl, his face suddenly bedewed with a cold perspiration. A strange expression flitted for an instant over the features; his eyelids drooped; there was a little twitching about the mouth—

"Pierre! Pierre! Pierre! call the countess!" said I, hurriedly, loosing the earl's shirt-neck, for I saw he was *dying*. Before the valet returned, however, while the muffled tramp of footsteps was heard on the stairs, approaching nearer—nearer—nearer—it was all over! the haughty Earl of —— had gone where rank and riches availed him nothing—to be *alone with God!*

\* \* \* \* \*

On arriving home that evening, my mind saddened with the scene I had left, I found my wife Emily sitting by the drawing-room fire, alone, and in tears. On inquiring the reason of it, she told me that a charwoman, who had been that day engaged at our house, had been telling Jane—my wife's maid—who, of course, communicated it to her mistress, one of the most heartrending tales of distress that she had ever listened to—that poverty and disease united could

inflict on humanity. My sweet wife's voice, ever eloquent in the cause of benevolence, did not require much exertion to persuade me to resume my walking-trim, and go that very evening to the scene of wretchedness she described. The char-woman had gone half an hour ago, but left the name and address of the family she spoke of; and after learning them, I set off. The cold was so fearfully intense, that I was obliged to return and get a "comfortable" for my neck—and Emily took the opportunity to empty all the loose silver in her purse into my hand, saying, "You know what to do with it, love!" Blessing her benevolent heart, I once more set out on my errand of mercy. With some difficulty I found out the neighbourhood, threading my doubtful way through a labyrinth of obscure back-streets, lanes, and alleys, till I came to "Peter's Place," where the objects of my visit resided. I began to be apprehensive for the safety of my person and property when I discovered the sort of neighbourhood I had got into.

"Do you know where some people of the name of O'Hurdle live?" I inquired of the watchman, who was passing, bawling the hour.

"Yis, I knows *two* of that 'ere name hereabouts—which Hurdle is it, sir?" inquired the gruff guardian of the night.

"I really don't exactly know—the people I want are very, *very* poor."

"Oh! oh! oh! I'm thinking they're all much of a muchness for the matter of that, about here," he replied, setting down his lantern, and slapping his hands against his sides to keep himself warm.

"But the people I want are very *ill*—I'm a doctor."

"Oh, oh! you must be meaning 'em 'oose son was transported yesterday? His name was Tim O'Hurdle, sir—though some called him Jimmy—and I was the man that catch'd him, sir—I did! It was for a robbery in this here—"

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"Ay, ay—I dare say they are the people I want. Where is their house?" I inquired hastily, somewhat disturbed at the latter portion of his intelligence—a new and forbidding feature of the case.

"I'll show 'ee the way, sir," said the watchman, walking before me, and holding his lantern close to the ground to light my path. He led me to the last house of the Place, and through a miserable dilapidated doorway; then up two pair of narrow, dirty, broken stairs, till we found ourselves at the top of the house. He knocked at the door with the end of his stick, and called out, "Holloa, missus! Hey! Withint there! You're wanted here!" adding suddenly, in a lower tone, touching his hat, "It's a bitter night, sir—a trifle, sir, to keep one's self warm—drink your health, sir." I gave him a trifle, motioned him away, and took his place at the door.

"Thank your honour! Mind your watch and pockets, sir—that's all," he muttered, and left me. I felt very nervous, as the sound of his retreating footsteps died away down stairs. I had half a mind to follow him.

"Who's there?" inquired a female voice through the door, opened only an inch or two.

"It's I—a doctor. Is your name O'Hurdle? Is any one ill here? I'm come to see you. Betsy Jones, a char-woman, told me of you."

"You're right, sir," replied the same voice, sorrowfully. "Walk in, sir," and the door was opened wide enough for me to enter.

Now, reader, who, while glancing over these sketches, are perhaps reposing in the lap of luxury, believe me when I tell you, that the scene which I shall attempt to set before you, as I encountered it, I feel to beggar all my powers of description; and that what you may conceive to be exaggerations are infinitely short of the frightful realities of that evening. Had I not seen and known for myself, I should scarce have believed that such misery existed.

"Wait a moment, sir, an' I'll fetch you a light," said the woman, in a strong Irish accent; and I stood still outside the door till she returned with a rushlight, stuck in a blue bottle. I had time for no more than one glimpse at the haggard features and filthy ragged appearance of the bearer, with an infant at the breast, before a gust of wind, blowing through an unstopped broken pane in the window, suddenly extinguished the candle, and we were left in a sort of darkness visible, the only object I could see being the faint glow of expiring embers on the hearth. "Would your honour be after standing still a while, or you'll be threading on the chilther?" said the woman; and bending down, she endeavoured to relight the candle by the embers. The poor creature tried in vain, however; for it seemed there was but an inch or two of candle left, and the heat of the embers melted it away, and the wick fell out.

"Oh, murther—there! What *will* we do?" exclaimed the woman; "that's the last bit of candle we've in the house, an' it's not a farthing I have to buy another!"

"Come—send and buy another," said I, giving her a shilling, though I was obliged to *feel* for her hand.

"Oh, thank your honour!" said she; "an' we'll soon be seeing one another. Here, Sal! Sal! Sally! —Here, ye cratur!"

"Well, and what d'ye want with *me*?" asked a sullen voice from another part of the room, while there was a rustling of straw.

"Fait, an' ye must get up wid ye, and go to buy a candle. Here's a shilling—"

"Heigh—and isn't it a loaf o' bread ye should rather be after buying, mother?" growled the same voice.

"Perhaps the doctor won't mind," stammered the mother; "he won't mind our getting a loaf too."

"Oh, no, no ! For God's sake, go directly, and get what you like !" said I, touched by the woman's tone and manner.

"Ho, Sal ! Get up—ye may buy some bread too."

"Bread ! bread ! bread !—Where's the shilling ?" said the same voice, in quick and eager tones ; and the ember-light enabled me barely to distinguish the dim outline of a figure rising from the straw on which it had been stretched, and which nearly overturned me by stumbling against me, on its way towards where the mother stood. It was a grown-up girl, who, after receiving the shilling, promised to bring the candle lighted, lest their own fire should not be sufficient, and withdrew, slamming the door violently after her, and rattling down stairs with a rapidity which showed the interest she felt in her errand.

"I'm sorry it's not a seat we have that's fit for you, sir," said the woman, approaching towards where I was standing ; "but if I may make so bold as to take your honour's hand, I'll guide you to the only one we have—barring the floor—a box by the fire, and there ye'll sit perhaps till she comes with a light."

"Any where—any where, my good woman," said I ; "but I hope your daughter will return soon, for I have not long to be here," and giving her my gloved hand, she led me to a deal-box, on which I sat down, and she on the floor beside me. I was beginning to ask her some questions, when the moaning of a little child interrupted me.

"Hush ! hush !—ye little divil—hush !—ye'll be waking your poor daddy !—hush !—go to sleep wid ye !" said the woman, in an earnest under-tone.

"Och—och—mammy !—mammy ! an' isn't it *so could* ?—I *can't* sleep, mammy," replied the tremulous voice of a very young child ; and directing my eyes to the quarter from which the sound came, I fancied

I saw a poor shivering half-naked little creature, cowering under the window.

"Hish!—lie still wid ye, ye infortunat' little divil—an' ye'll presently get something to eat.—We ha'n't none of us tasted a morsel sin' the morning, doctor!" The child she spoke to ceased its moanings instantly; but I heard the sound of its little teeth chattering, and as of its hands rubbing and striking together. Well it might, poor wretch—for I protest the room was nearly as cold as the open air; for, besides the want of fire, the bleak wind blew in chilling gusts through the broken panes of the window.

"Why, how many of you are there in this place my good woman?" said I.

"Och, murther! murther! murther! an' isn't there—barring Sal, that's gone for the candle, and Bobby, that's out begging, and Tim, that the ould divils at Newgate have sent away to *Bottomless*\* yesterday," she continued, bursting into tears;—"och, an' won't that same be the death o' me, and the poor father o' the boy—an' it wasn't sich a sentence he deserved—but hush! hush!" she continued, lowering her tones, "an' it's waking the father o' him I'll be, that doesn't—"

"I understand your husband is ill?" said I.

"Fait, sir—as ill as the 'smatticks [asthmatics] can make him—the Lord pity him! But he's had a blessed hour's sleep, the poor fellow! though the little brat he has in his arms has been making a noise—a little divil that it is—it's the youngest, barring this one I'm suckling—an' it's not a fortnight it is sin' it first looked on its mother!" she continued, sobbing, and kissing her baby's hand; "och, och! that the little cratur had niver been born!"

I heard footsteps slowly approaching the room; and presently a few rays of light flickered through the chinks and fissures of the door, which was in a

\* Botany Bay.

moment or two pushed open, and "Sal" made her appearance, shading the lighted candle in her hand, and holding a quartern loaf under her arm. She had brought but a wretched rushlight, which she hastily stuck into the neck of the bottle, and placed it on a shelf over the fireplace; and then—what a scene was visible!

The room was a garret, and the sloping ceiling—if such it might be called—made it next to impossible to move any where in an upright position. The mockery of a window had not one entire pane of glass in it; but some of the holes were stopped with straw, rags, and brown paper, while one or two were not stopped at all! There was not an article of furniture in the place; no, not a bed, chair, or table of any kind; the last remains of it had been seized for arrears of rent—eighteen pence a-week—by the horrid harpy, their landlady, who lived on the ground-floor! The floor was littered with dirty straw, such as swine might scorn—but which formed the only couch of this devoted family! The rushlight eclipsed the dying glow of the few embers, so that there was not even the *appearance* of a fire! And *this* in a garret facing the north—on one of the bitterest and bleakest nights I ever knew! My heart sunk within me at witnessing such frightful misery and destitution, and contrasted it, for an instant, with the aristocratical splendour, the exquisite luxuries of my last patient! *Lazarus and Dives!*—The woman with whom I had been conversing was a mere bundle of filthy rags—a squalid, shivering, starved creature, holding to her breast a half-naked infant,—her matted hair hanging long and loosely down her back and over her shoulders; her daughter "Sal" was in like plight—a sullen, ill-favoured slut of about eighteen, who seemed ashamed of being seen, and hung her head like a guilty one. She had resumed her former station on some straw—her bed!—in the extreme corner of the room, where she was squatting, with a little creature

cowering close beside her, both munching ravenously the bread which had been purchased. The miserable father of the family was seated on the floor, with his back propped against the opposite side of the fireplace to that which I occupied, and held a child clasped loosely in his arms, though he had plainly fallen asleep. O what a wretched object! a foul, shapeless, brown paper cap on his head, and a ragged fustian jacket on his back, which a beggar might have spurned with loathing!

The sum of what the woman communicated to me was, that her husband, a bricklayer by trade, had been long unable to work, on account of his asthma; and that their only means of subsistence were a paltry pittance from the parish, her own scanty earnings as a washerwoman, which had been interrupted by her recent confinement, and charities collected by "Sal," and "Bobby, who was then out begging." Their oldest son, Tim, a lad of sixteen, had been transported for seven years, the day before, for a robbery, of which his mother vehemently declared him innocent; and this last circumstance had, more than all the rest, completely broken the hearts of both his father and mother, who had absolutely starved themselves and their children, in order to hoard up enough to fee an Old Bailey counsel to plead for their son! The husband had been for some time, I found, an out-patient of one of the Infirmaries; "an' this poor little *darlint*," said she, sobbing bitterly, and hugging her infant closer to her, "has got the measles, I'm fearin'; and little Bobby, too, is catching them.—Och, murther—murther! Oh, Christ, pity us, poor inners that we are!—Oh! what will we do? what will we do?" and she almost choked herself with stifling her sobs, for fear of waking her husband.

"And what is the matter with the child that your husband is holding in his arms?" I inquired, pointing to it, as it sat in its father's arms, munching a little crust of bread, and ever and anon patting its father's face, exclaiming, "Da-a-a!—Ab-bab-ba!—Ab-bab-ba!"



"Och! what ails the cratur? Nothing, but that it's half-starved and naked—an' isn't that enough—an' isn't it *kilt*? I wish we all were—every mother's son of us!" groaned the miserable woman, sobbing as if her heart would break. At that moment a lamentable noise was heard on the stairs, as of a lad crying, accompanied by the pattering of naked feet. "Och, murther!" exclaimed the woman, with an agitated air.—"What's ailing with Bobby? Is it crying he is?" and starting to the door, she threw it open time enough to admit a ragged shivering urchin, about ten years old, without shoes or stockings, and having no cap, and rags pinned about him, which he was obliged to hold up with his right hand, while the other covered his left cheek. The little wretch, after a moment's pause, occasioned by seeing a strange gentleman in the room, proceeded to put three or four coppers into his mother's lap, telling her, with painful gestures, that a gentleman, whom he had followed a few steps in the street, importuning for charity, had turned round unexpectedly, and struck him a severe blow with a cane over his face and shoulders.

"Let me look at your face, my poor little fellow," said I, drawing him to me; and on removing his hand, I saw a long weal all down the left cheek. I wish I could forget the look of tearless agony with which his mother put her arms round his neck, and drawing him to her breast, exclaimed, faintly,—*"Bobby! my Bobby!"* After a few moments she released the boy, pointing to the spot where his sisters sat still munching their bread. The instant he saw what they were doing, he sprung towards them, and plucked a large fragment from the loaf, fastening on it like a young wolf!

"Why, they'll finish the loaf before you've tasted it, my good woman," said I.

"Och, the poor things!—Let them—let them!" she replied, wiping away a tear. "I can do without it longer than they—the craturs!"

"Well, my poor woman," said I, "I have n much time to spare, as it is growing late. I came here to see what I could do for you as a doctor. How many of you are ill?"

"Fait, an' isn't it ailing we all of us are! Ah, your honour!—A 'Firmary, without physic or victuals!"

"Well, we must see what can be done for you. What is the matter with your husband, there?" said I, turning towards him. He was still asleep, in spite of the tickling and stroking of his child's hands, who, at the moment I looked, was trying to push the corner of its crust into its father's mouth, chuckling and crowing the while, as is the wont of children who find a passive subject for their drolleries.

"Och, och! the little villain—the thing," said she, impatiently, seeing the child's employment. "Isn't it waking him it'll be?—st—st!"

"Let me see him nearer," said I; "I *must* wake him, and ask him a few questions."

I moved from my seat towards him. His head hung down drowsily. His wife took down the candle from the shelf, and held it a little above her husband's head, while I came in front of him, and stooped on one knee to interrogate him.

"Phelim! love! honey! darlint!—Wake wid ye! An' isn't it the doctor that comes to see ye?" said she, nudging him with her knee. He did not stir, however. The child, regardless of us, was still playing with his passive features. A glimpse of the awful truth flashed across my mind.

"Let me have the candle a moment, my good woman," said I, rather seriously.

The man was dead.

He must have expired nearly an hour ago, for his face and hands were quite cold; but the position in which he sat, together with the scantiness of the light, concealed the event. It was fearful to see the ghastly pallor of the features, the fixed pupils, the

glassy glare downwards, the fallen jaw!—Was it not a subject for a painter? The living child in the arms of its dead father, unconsciously sporting with a corpse!

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To attempt a *description* of what ensued would be idle and even ridiculous. It is hardly possible even to imagine it! In one word, the neighbours who lived on the floor beneath were called in, and did their utmost to console the wretched widow and quiet the children. They laid out the corpse decently; and I left them all the silver I had about me, to enable them to purchase a few of the more pressing necessities. I succeeded afterward in gaining two of the children admittance into a charity school; and through my wife's interference, the poor widow received the efficient assistance of an unobtrusive, but most incomparable institution, "*The Stranger's Friend Society.*" I was more than once present when those angels of mercy—those "true Samaritans"—the "Visitors" of the society, as they are called—were engaged on this noble errand, and wished that their numbers were countless, and their means inexhaustible.

### *Grave Doings.*

My gentle reader,—start not at learning that I have been, in my time, a RESURRECTIONIST. Let not this appalling word, this humiliating confession conjure up in your fancy a throng of vampire-like images and associations, or earn your "physician's" dismissal from your hearts and hearths. It is your own groundless fears, my fair trembler!—your own superstitious prejudices that have driven me, and will drive many others of my brethren to such dreadful doings as those hereafter detailed. Come, come—let us have one word of reason between us on the abstract question—and then for my tale. You expect us to cure you of disease, and yet deny us the only means

of learning *how*! You would have us bring you the ore of skill and experience, yet forbid us to break the soil, or sink a shaft! Is this fair, *fair* reader? Is this reasonable?

What I am now going to describe was my first and last exploit in the way of body-stealing. It was a grotesque, if not a ludicrous scene, and occurred during the period of my "walking the hospitals," as it is called, which occupied the two seasons immediately after my leaving Cambridge. A young and rather interesting female was admitted a patient at the hospital I attended; her case baffled all our skill, and her symptoms even defied our nosology. Now it seemed an enlargement of the heart—now an ossification—now this, that, and the other; and at last it was plain we knew nothing at all about the matter—no, not even whether her disorder was organic or functional, primary or symptomatic—or whether it *was* really the heart that was at fault. She received no benefit at all under the fluctuating schemes of treatment we pursued, and at length fell into dying circumstances. As soon as her friends were apprized of her situation, and had an inkling of our intention to open the body, they insisted on removing her immediately from the hospital, that she might "die at home." In vain did Sir —— and his dressers expostulate vehemently with them, and represent in exaggerated terms the imminent peril attending such a step. Her two brothers avowed their apprehension of our designs, and were inflexible in exercising their right of removing their sister. I used all my rhetoric on the occasion—but in vain; and at last said to the young men, "Well, if you are afraid only of our *dissecting* her, we can get hold of her, if we are so disposed, as easily if she died with you, as with us."

"Well—we'll *trov* that, measter," replied the elder, while his Herculean fist oscillated somewhat significantly before my eyes. The poor girl was removed accordingly to her father's house, which was at a

certain village about five miles from London, and survived her arrival scarcely ten minutes! We soon contrived to receive intelligence of the event; and as I and Sir——'s two dressers had taken great interest in the case throughout, and felt intense curiosity about the real nature of the disease, we met together and entered into a solemn compact, that come what might, we would have her body out of the ground. A trusty spy informed us of the time and exact place of the girl's burial; and on expressing to Sir——our determination about the matter, he patted me on the back, saying, "Ah, my fine fellow—if you have spirit enough—dangerous," &c. &c. Was it not skillfully said? The baronet further told us he felt himself so curious about the matter, that if fifty pounds would be of use to us, they were at our service. It needed not this, nor a glance at the *eclat* with which the successful issue of the affair would be attended among our fellow-students, to spur our resolves.

The notable scheme was finally adjusted at my rooms in the Borough. M—— and E——, Sir——'s dressers, and myself, with an experienced "*grab*," that is to say, a *professional* resurrectionist—were to set off from the Borough about nine o'clock the next evening—which would be the third day after the burial—in a glass coach, provided with all "appliances and means to boot." During the day, however, our friend the grab suffered so severely from an over-night's excess, as to disappoint us of his invaluable assistance. This unexpected *contretemps* nearly put an end to our project; for the few other grabs we knew were absent on *professional tours*! Luckily, however, I bethought me of a poor Irish porter—a sort of "ne'er-do-weel" hanger-on at the hospital, whom I had several times hired to go on errands. This man I sent for to my rooms, and in the presence of my two coadjutors, persuaded, threatened, and bothered into acquiescence, promising him half a guinea for his evening's work—and as much whiskey

as he could drink prudently. As Mr. Tip—that was the name he went by—had some personal acquaintance with the sick grab, he succeeded in borrowing his chief tools; with which, in a sack large enough to contain our expected prize, he repaired to my rooms about nine o'clock, while the coach was standing at the door. Our Jehu had received a quiet *douceur* in addition to the hire of himself and coach. As soon as we had exhibited sundry doses of Irish cordial to our friend Tip, under the effects of which he became quite “bouncible,” and *ranted* about the feat he was to take a prominent part in—and equipped ourselves in our worst clothes, and white top-coats, we entered the vehicle—four in number—and drove off. The weather had been exceedingly capricious all the evening—moonlight, rain, thunder and lightning, fitfully alternating. The only thing we were anxious about, was the darkness, to shield us from all possible observation. I must own that in analyzing the feelings that prompted me to undertake and go through with this affair, the mere love of adventure operated as powerfully as the wish to benefit the cause of anatomical science. A midnight expedition to the tombs!—It took our fancy amazingly; and then—Sir ——’s cunning hint about the “danger,” and our “spirit!”

The garrulous Tip supplied us with amusement all the way down—rattle, rattle, rattle, incessantly; but as soon as we had arrived at that part of the road where we were to stop, and caught sight of —— church, with its hoary steeple gray-glistening in the fading moonlight, as though it was standing sentinel over the graves around it, one of which we were going so rudely to violate, Tip’s spirits began to falter a little. He said little—and that at intervals. To be very candid with the reader, *none* of us felt over-much at our ease. Our expedition began to wear a somewhat hair-brained aspect, and to be environed with formidable contingencies which we had not

taken sufficiently into our calculations. What, for instance, if the two stout fellows, the brothers, should be out watching their sister's grave? They were not likely to stand on much ceremony with us. And then the manual difficulties! E—— was the only one of us that had ever assisted at the exhumation of a body; and the rest of us were likely to prove but bungling workmen. However, we had gone too far to think of retreating. We none of us *spoke* our suspicions, but the silence that reigned within the coach was significant. In contemplation, however, of some such contingency, we had put a bottle of brandy in the coach-pocket; and before we drew up, we had all four of us drunk pretty deeply of it. At length the coach turned down a by-lane to the left, which led directly to the churchyard wall; and after moving a few steps down it, in order to shelter our vehicle from the observation of highway passengers, the coach stopped, and the driver opened the door.

"Come, Tip," said I, "out with you!"

"Get out, did ye say, sir? To be sure I will—Out! to be sure I will." But there was small show of alacrity in his movements as he descended the steps; for while I was speaking, I was interrupted by the solemn clangour of the church clock announcing the hour of midnight. The sounds seemed to *warn* us against what we were going to do.

"'Tis a could night, yer honours," said Tip, in an under-tone, as we successively alighted, and stood together, looking up and down the dark lane, to see if any thing was stirring but ourselves. "'Tis a could night—and—and—and," he stammered.

"Why, you cowardly old scoundrel," grumbled M——, "are you frightened already? What's the matter, eh? Hoist up the bag on your shoulders directly, and lead the way down the lane."

"Och, but yer honours—och! by the mother that bore me, but 'tis a murtherous cruel thing, I'm thinking, to wake the poor cratur from her last sleep."

He said this so querulously, that I began to entertain serious apprehensions, after all, of his defection; so I insisted on his taking a little more brandy, by way of bringing him up to par. It was of no use, however. His reluctance increased every moment, and it even dispirited ~~me~~. I verily believe the turning of a straw would have decided us all on jumping into the coach again, and returning home without accomplishing our errand. Too many of the students however, were apprized of our expedition, for us to think of terminating it so ridiculously! As it were by mutual consent, we stood and paused a few moments, about half-way down the lane. M—— whistled with infinite success and distinctness; E—— remarked to me that he “always thought that a churchyard at midnight was the gloomiest object imaginable;” and I talked about *business*—“soon be over”—“shallow grave,” &c. &c. “Confound it—what if those two brothers of hers should be there?” said M——, abruptly, making a dead stop, and folding his arms on his breast.

“Powerful fellows, both of them!” muttered E——. We resumed our march—when Tip, our advanced guard—a title he earned by anticipating our steps about three inches—suddenly stood still, let down the bag from his shoulders—elevated both hands in a listening attitude, and exclaimed, “Whisht whisht!—By my soul—*what* was that?” We all paused in silence, looking palely at one another—but could hear nothing except the drowsy flutter of a bat wheeling away from us a little overhead.

“Fait—an’ wasn’t it somebody *spaking* on the far side o’ the hedge, I heard?” whispered Tip.

“Pho—stuff, you idiot!” I exclaimed, losing my temper. “Come, M—— and E——, it’s high time we had done with all this cowardly nonsense, and if we mean really to *do* any thing, we must make haste. ’Tis past twelve—day breaks about four—and it is coming on wet, you see.” Several large drops of



rain pattering heavily among the leaves and branches, corroborated my words, by announcing a coming shower, and the air was sultry enough to warrant the expectation of a thunder-storm. We therefore buttoned up our great-coats to the chin, and hurried on to the churchyard wall, which ran across the bottom of the lane. This wall we had to climb over to get into the churchyard, and it was not a very high one. Here Tip annoyed us again. I told him to lay down his bag, mount the wall, and look over into the yard, to see whether all was clear before us; and, as far as the light would enable him, to look about for a new-made grave. Very reluctantly he complied, and contrived to scramble to the top of the wall. He had hardly time, however, to peer over into the churchyard, when a fluttering streak of lightning flashed over us, followed in a second or two by a loud burst of thunder! Tip fell in an instant to the ground, like a cock-chaffer shaken from an elm-tree, and lay crossing himself, and muttering Paternosters. We could scarce help laughing at the manner in which he tumbled down, simultaneously with the flash of lightning. "Now, look ye, gentlemen," said he, still squatted on the ground, "do ye mane to give the poor cratur Christian burial, when ye've done wid her? An' will ye put her back again as ye found her? 'Case, if you wont, blood an' oons—"

"Now, look ye, Tip," said I, sternly, taking out one of a brace of *empty* pistols I had put into my great-coat pocket, and presenting it to his head; "we have hired you on this business for the want of a better, you wretched fellow! and if you give us any more of this nonsense, by — I'll send a bullet through your brain! Do you hear me, Tip?"

"Och, aisy, aisy wid ye! don't murther me! Bad luck to me, that I ever cam wid ye! Och, and if iver I live to die, won't I see and bury my ould body out o' the rache of all the docthers in the world? If I

don't divil burn me!" We all laughed aloud at Mr. Tip's truly Hibernian expostulation.

"Come, sir, mount! over with you!" said we, helping to push him upwards. "Now, drop this bag on the other side," we continued, giving him the sack that contained our implements. We all three of us then followed, and alighted safely in the churchyard. It poured with rain; and to enhance the dreariness and horrors of the time and place, flashes of lightning followed in quick succession, shedding a transient awful glare over the scene, revealing the white tombstones, the ivy-grown venerable church, and our own figures, a shivering group, come on an unhallowed errand! I perfectly well recollect the lively feelings of apprehension—the "compunctious visitings of remorse"—which the circumstance called forth in my own breast, and which I had no doubt were shared by my companions.

As no time, however, was to be lost, I left the group for an instant under the wall, to search out the grave. The accurate instructions I had received enabled me to pitch on the spot with little difficulty; and I returned to my companions, who immediately followed me to the scene of operations. We had no umbrellas, and our great-coats were saturated with wet; but the brandy we had recently taken did us good service, by exhilarating our spirits, and especially those of Tip. He untied the sack in a twinkling, and shook out the hoes and spades, &c.; and taking one of the latter himself, he commenced digging with such energy, that we had hardly prepared ourselves for work before he had cleared away nearly the whole of the mound. The rain soon abated, and the lightning ceased for a considerable interval, though thunder was heard occasionally rumbling sullenly in the distance, as if expressing anger at our unholy doings—at least I felt it so. The pitchy darkness continued, so that we could scarce see one another's figures. We worked on in silence, as fast as our spades could

be got into the ground; taking it in turns, two by two, as the grave would not admit of more. On—on—on we worked, till we had hollowed out about three feet of earth. Tip then hastily joined a long iron screw, or borer, which he thrust into the ground for the purpose of ascertaining the depth at which the coffin yet lay from us. To our vexation, we found a distance of three feet had yet to be got through. "Sure, and by the soul of St. Patrick, but we'll not be down by the morning!" said Tip, as he threw down the instrument, and resumed his spade. We were all discouraged! Oh, how greatly I wished myself at home, in my snug little bed in the Borough! How I cursed the Quixotism that had led me into such an undertaking! I had no time, however, for reflection, as it was my turn to relieve one of the diggers; so into the grave I jumped, and worked away as lustily as before. While I was thus engaged, a sudden noise, close to our ears, startled me so, that I protest I thought I should drop down dead in the grave I was robbing. I and my fellow-digger dropped our spades, and all four stood still for a second or two, in an ecstasy of fearful apprehension. We could not see more than a few inches around us, but heard the grass trodden by approaching feet! They proved to be those of an ass, that was turned at night into the churchyard, and had gone on eating his way towards us; and while we were standing in mute expectation of what was to come next, opened on us with an astounding hee-haw! hee-haw! hee-haw! Even after we had discovered the ludicrous nature of the interruption, we were too agitated to laugh! The brute was actually close upon us, and had *given tongue* from under poor Tip's elbow, having approached him from behind as he stood leaning on his spade. Tip started suddenly backward against the animal's head, and fell down. Away sprung the jackass, as much confounded as Tip, kicking and scampering like a mad creature among the tomb-

stones, and hee-hawing incessantly, as if a hundred devils had got into it for the purpose of discomfiting us. I felt so much fury, and fear lest the noise should lead to our discovery, that I could have killed the brute, if it had been within my reach; while Tip stammered, in an affrighted whisper—"Och, the baste! Och, the baste! The big black divil of a baste! The murtherous—murthering"—and a great many epithets of the same sort. We gradually recovered from the agitation which this provoking interruption had occasioned; and Tip, under the promise of two bottles of whiskey as soon as we arrived safe at home with our prize, renewed his exertions, and dug with such energy that we soon cleared away the remainder of the superincumbent earth, and stood upon the bare lid of the coffin. The grapplers, with ropes attached to them, were then fixed in the sides and extremities, and we were in the act of raising the coffin, when the sound of a human voice, accompanied with footsteps, fell on our startled ears. We heard both distinctly, and crouched down close over the brink of the grave, awaiting in breathless suspense a corroboration of our fears. After a pause of five or six minutes, however, finding that the sounds were not renewed, we began to breathe freer, persuaded that our ears must have deceived us. Once more we resumed our work, succeeded in hoisting up the coffin—not without a slip, however, which nearly precipitated it down again to the bottom, with all four of us upon it—and depositing it on the grave-side. Before proceeding to use our screws or wrenchers, we once more looked and listened, and listened and looked; but neither seeing nor hearing any thing, we set to work, and pried off the lid in a twinkling, and a transient glimpse of moonlight disclosed to us the shrouded inmate—all white and damp. I removed the face-cloth, and unpinned the cap, while M—— loosed the sleeves from the wrists. Thus were we engaged, when E——, who had hold

of the feet, ready to lift them out, suddenly let them go—gasped—“Oh, my God! there they are!” and placed his hand on my arm. He shook like an aspen leaf. I looked towards the quarter where his eyes were directed, and, sure enough, saw the figure of a man—if not two—moving stealthily towards us. “Well, we’re discovered, that’s clear,” I whispered, as calmly as I could. “We shall be murdered!” groaned E—. “Lend me one of the pistols you have with you,” said M—, resolutely. “By —, I’ll have a shot for my life, however!” As for poor Tip, who had heard every syllable of this startling colloquy, and himself seen the approaching figures, he looked at me in silence, the image of blank horror! I could have laughed even then, to see his staring black eyes—his little cocked ruby-tinted nose—his chattering teeth. “Hush—hush!” said I, cocking my pistol, while M— did the same; for none but myself knew they were unloaded. To add to our consternation, the malignant moon withdrew the small scantling of light she had been doling out to us, and sunk beneath a vast cloud, “black as Erebus,” but not before we had caught a glimpse of two more figures moving towards us in an opposite direction, “Surrounded!” two of us muttered in the same breath. We all rose to our feet, and stood together, not knowing what to do—unable in the darkness to see one another distinctly. Presently we heard a voice say, “Where are they? where? *Sure* I saw them! Oh, there they are! Halloa—halloa!”

That was enough—the signal for our flight. Without an instant’s pause, or uttering another syllable, off we sprung like small shot from a gun’s mouth, all of us in different directions, we knew not whither. I heard the report of a gun—mercy on me! and pelted away scarce knowing what I was about, dodging among the graves,—now coming full-butt against a plaguy tombstone, then stumbling on the slippery grass—while some one followed close at my heels

panting and puffing, but whether friend or foe I knew not. At length I stumbled against a large tombstone; and finding it open at the two ends, crept under it, resolved there to abide the issue. At the moment of my ensconcing myself, the sound of the person's footsteps who had followed me suddenly ceased. I heard a splashing sound, then a kicking and scrambling, a faint stifled cry of "Ugh—oh—agh!" and all was still. Doubtless it must be one of my companions, who had been wounded. What could I do, however? I did not know in what direction he lay—the night was pitch-dark—and if I crept from my hiding-place, for all I knew, I might be shot myself. I shall never forget that hour—no, never! There was I, squatting like a toad on the wet grass and weeds, not daring to do more than breathe! Here was a predicament! I could not conjecture how the affair would terminate. Was I to lie where I was till daylight? What was become of my companions?—While I was turning these thoughts in my mind, and wondering that all was so quiet, my ear caught the sound of the splashing of water, apparently at but a yard or two's distance, mingled with the sounds of a half-smothered human voice—"Ugh! ugh! och, murther! murther! murther!"—another splash—"and isn't it drowned and kilt I am?"

"Whew! *Tip* in trouble," thought I, not daring to speak. Yes—it was poor *Tip*, I afterward found—who had followed at my heels, scampering after me as fast as fright could drive him, till his career was unexpectedly ended by his tumbling—souse—head over heels, into a newly opened grave in his path, with more than a foot of water in it. There the poor fellow remained, after recovering from the first shock of his fall, not daring to utter a word for some time, lest he should be discovered—straddling over the water with his toes and elbows stuck into the loose soil on each side, to support him. This was his interesting position, as he subsequently informed me,

at the time of uttering the sounds which first attracted my attention. Though not aware of his situation at the time, I was almost choked with laughter as he went on with his soliloquy, somewhat in this strain:—

“Och, Tip, ye ould divil! Don’t it sarve ye right, ye fool? Ye villanous ould coffin-robber! Won’t ye burn for this hereafter, ye sinner? Ulaloo! When ye are dead yourself, may ye be treated like that poor cratur—and yourself alive to see it! Och, hubbaboo! hubbaboo! Isn’t it sure that I’ll be drowned, an’ then it’s kilt I’ll be!”—a loud splash, and a pause for a few moments, as if he was readjusting his footing—“Och, an’ I’m catching my dith of could! Fait, an’ it’s a divil a drop of the two bottles o’ whiskey I’ll ever see—Och, och, och!” another splash—“Och, an’ isn’t this uncomfortable! Och, an’ if ever I come out of this—sha’n’t I be dead before I do?”

“Tip—Tip—Tip!” I whispered, in a low tone. There was a dead silence. “Tip, Tip, where are you? What’s the matter, eh?”—No answer; but he muttered in a low tone to himself—“*Where am I*, by my soul! Isn’t it dead, and kilt, and drowned, and murdered I am—that’s all!”

“Tip—Tip—Tip!” I repeated, a little louder.

“Tip, indeed! Fait, ye may call, bad luck to ye— whoever ye are—but its divil a word ’ll I be after spaking to ye.”

“Tip, you simpleton! It’s I—Mr. —!”

In an instant there was a sound of jumping and splashing, as if surprise had made him slip from his standing again, and he called out, “Whoo! Whoo! an’ is’t you, sweet Mr. —? What is the matter wid ye? Are ye kilt? Where are they all? Have they taken ye away, every mother’s son of you?” he asked eagerly, in a breath.

“Why, what are you doing, Tip? Where are you?”

“Fait, an’ it’s being *washed* I am, in the feet, and

in the queerest *tub* your honour ever saw !"—A noise of scuffling not many yards off silenced us both in an instant. Presently I distinguished the voice of E——, calling out, "Help, M——!"—my name—"Where are you?" The noise increased, and seemed nearer than before. I crept from my lurking-place, and aided at Tip's resurrection, and both of us hurried towards the spot where the sound came from. By the faint moonlight, I could just see the outlines of two figures violently struggling and grappling together. Before I could come up to them, both fell down locked in each other's arms, rolling over each other, grasping one another's collars, gasping and panting as if in mortal struggle. The moon suddenly emerged, and who do you think, reader, was E——'s antagonist? Why, the person whose appearance had discomfited and affrighted us all—our OACHMAN.—That worthy individual, alarmed at our protracted stay, had, contrary to our injunctions, left his coach to come and search after us. He it was whom we had seen stealing towards us; his steps—his voice had alarmed us, for he could not see us distinctly enough to discover whether we were his fare or not. He was on the point of whispering my name, when we should all have understood one another—wherefore, we all started off in the manner which has been described; and he himself, not knowing that he was the reason of it, had taken to his heels, and fled for his life! He supposed we had fallen into a sort of ambuscade. He happened to hide himself behind the tombstone next but one to that which sheltered E——. Finding all quiet, he and E——, as if by mutual consent, were groping from their hiding-places, when they unexpectedly fell foul of one another—each too affrighted to speak—and hence the scuffle.

After this satisfactory denouement, we all repaired to the grave's mouth, and found the corpse and coffin precisely as we had left them. We were not many



moments in taking out the body, stripping it, and thrusting it into the sack we had brought. We then tied the top of the sack, carefully deposited the shroud, &c. in the coffin, rescrewed down the lid—fearful, impious mockery! and consigned it once more to its resting-place—Tip scattering a handful of earth on the lid, and exclaiming reverently, “An’ may the Lord forgive us for what we have done to ye!” The coachman and I then took the body between us to the coach, leaving M——, and E——, and Tip to fill up the grave.

Our troubles were not yet ended, however. Truly it seemed as though Providence was throwing every obstacle in our way. Nothing went right! On reaching the spot where we had left the coach, behold, it lay several yards farther in the lane, tilted into the ditch—for the horses, being hungry, and left to themselves, in their anxiety to graze on the verdant bank of the hedge, had contrived to overturn the vehicle in the ditch—and one of the horses was kicking vigorously when we came up—his whole body off the ground, and resting on that of his companion. We had considerable difficulty in righting the coach, as the horses were inclined to be obstreperous. We succeeded, however—deposited our unholy spoils within, turned the horses’ heads towards the high-road, and then, after enjoining Jehu to keep his place on the box, I went to see how my companions were getting on. They had nearly completed their task, and told me that “shovelling in was surprisingly easier than shovelling out!” We took great pains to leave every thing as neat, and as nearly resembling what we found it, as possible, in order that our visit might not be suspected. We then carried each our own tools, and hurried as fast as possible to our coach, for the dim twilight had already stolen a march upon us, devoutly thankful that, after so many interruptions, we had succeeded in effecting our object.

It was broad daylight before we reached town—

and a wretched coach-company we looked—all wearied and dirty—Tip especially, who snored in the corner as comfortably as if he had been warm in his bed. I heartily resolved, with him, on leaving the coach, that it should be “the devil’s own dear self only that should timplt me out agin *body-matching!*”\*

\* \* The Editor of these papers begs to inform all those who are so good as to transmit to him, “*Subjects for Passages*”—to be “worked up in his peculiar way”—that they have totally mistaken the character of this series of papers, in imagining them to be any thing else than what they profess to be—the *bona fide* results of the *individual’s* experience. Neither the Editor of these “*Passages*,” nor their original writer, is any “gatherer of other men’s stuff.”

\* On examining the body, we found that Sir ——’s suspicions were fully verified. It was disease of the heart—but of too complicated a nature to be made intelligible to general readers. I never heard that the girl’s friends discovered our doings; and for all they know, she is now mouldering away in —— churchyard; whereas, in point of fact, her bleached skeleton adorns ——’s surgery; and a preparation of her *heart* enriches ——’s museum!

VOL. II.—K

## CHAPTER III.

*The Ruined Merchant.*

It is a common saying, that sorrows never come alone—that “it never rains, but it pours;”\* and it has been verified by experience, even from the days of that prince of the wretched—the man “whose name was Job.” Now-a-days, directly a sudden accumulation of ills befalls a man, he utters some rash exclamation like the one in question, and too often submits to the inflictions of Providence with sullen indifference—like a brute to a blow—or resorts, possibly, to suicide. Poor, stupid, unobserving man, in such a case, cannot conceive how it comes to pass that all the evils under the sun are showered down upon *his* head—at once! There is no attempt to account for it on reasonable grounds—no reference to probable, nay, obvious causes,—his own misconduct, possibly, or imprudence. In a word, he fancies that the only thing they resemble is Epicurus’s fortuitous concourse of atoms. It is undoubtedly true that people are occasionally assailed by misfortunes so numerous, sudden, and simultaneous, as is really unaccountable. In the majority, however, of what are reputed such cases, a ready solution may be found, by any one of observation. Take a simple illustration. A passenger suddenly falls down in a crowded thoroughfare; and when down and unable to rise, the one following stumbles over him—the next, over him, and so on—all unable to resist the on-pressing crowd behind; and so the first-fallen lies nearly crushed

\* — — And now behold, O Gertrude, Gertrude—  
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,  
But in battalions!”—SHAKESPEARE.

and smothered. Now, is not this frequently the case with a man amid the cares and troubles of life? One solitary disaster—one unexpected calamity—befalls him; the sudden shock stuns him out of his self-possession; he is dispirited, confounded, paralyzed—and down he falls, in the very throng of all the pressing cares and troubles of life, one implicating and dragging after it another—till all is uproar and consternation. Then it is that we hear passionate lamentations, and cries of sorrows “never coming alone”—of all this “being against him;” and he either stupidly lies still, till he is crushed and trampled on, or, it may be, succeeds in scrambling to the first temporary resting-place he can espy, when he resigns himself to stupified inaction, staring vacantly at the throng of mishaps following in the wake of that one which bore him down. Whereas the first thought of one in such a situation should surely be, “Let me be ‘up and doing,’ and I may yet recover myself.” “Directly a man determines to *think*,” says an eminent writer, “he is wellnigh sure of bettering his condition.”

It is to the operation of such causes as these, that is to be traced, in a great majority of cases, the necessity for medical interference. Within the sphere of my own practice, I have witnessed, in such circumstances, the display of heroism and fortitude ennobling to human nature; and I have also seen instances of the most contemptible pusillanimity. I have marked a brave spirit succeed in buffeting its way out of its adversities; and I have seen as brave a one overcome by them, and falling vanquished, even with the sword of resolution gleaming in its grasp; for there *are* combinations of evil against which no human energies can make a stand. Of this I think the ensuing melancholy narrative will afford an illustration. What its effect on the mind of the reader may be, I cannot presume to speculate. *Mine* it has oppressed to recall the painful scenes with which it

abounds, and convinced of the peculiar perils incident to rapidly acquired fortune, which too often lifts its possessor into an element for which he is totally unfitted, and from which he falls exhausted, lower far than the sphere he had left!

Mr. Dudleigh's career afforded a striking illustration of the splendid but fluctuating fortunes of a great English merchant—of the magnificent results ensured by persevering industry, economy, prudence, and enterprise. Early in life he was cast upon the world, to do as he would, or rather *could*, with himself; for his guardian proved a swindler, and robbed his deceased friend's child of every penny that was left him. On hearing of the disastrous event, young Dudleigh instantly ran away from school, in his sixteenth year, and entered himself on board a vessel trading to the West Indies, as cabin-boy. As soon as his relatives, few in number, distant in degree, and colder in affection, heard of this step, they told him, after a little languid expostulation, that as he had made his bed, so he must lie upon it; and never came near him again, till he had become ten times richer than all of them put together.

The first three or four years of young Dudleigh's novitiate at sea were years of fearful, but not unusual hardship. I have heard him state that he was frequently flogged by the captain and mate till the blood ran down his back like water; and kicked and cuffed about by the common sailors with infamous impunity. One cause of all this was obvious, his evident superiority over every one on board in learning and acquirements. To such an extent did his tormentors carry their tyranny, that poor Dudleigh's life became intolerable; and one evening, on leaving the vessel after its arrival in port from the West Indies, he ran to a public-house in Wapping, called for pen and ink, and wrote a letter to the chief owner of the vessel, acquainting him with the cruel usage he had suffered, and imploring his inter-

ference; adding, that if that application failed, he was determined to drown himself when they next went to sea. This letter, which was signed "*Henry Dudley, cabin-boy,*" astonished and interested the person to whom it was addressed; for it was accurately, and even eloquently worded. Young Dudley was sent for, and after a thorough examination into the nature of his pretensions, engaged as a clerk in the counting-house of the ship-owners, at a small salary. He conducted himself with so much ability and integrity, and displayed such a zealous interest in his employers' concerns, that in a few years' time he was raised to the head of their large establishment, and received a salary of 500*l.* a-year, as their senior and confidential clerk. The experience he gained in this situation enabled him, on the unexpected bankruptcy of his employers, to dispose most successfully of the greater proportion of what he had saved in their service. He purchased shares in two vessels, which made fortunate voyages; and the result determined him henceforth to conduct business on his own account, notwithstanding the offer of a most lucrative situation similar to his last. In a word, he went on conducting his speculations with as much prudence, as he undertook them with energy and enterprise.

The period I am alluding to may be considered as the golden age of the shipping interest; and it will occasion surprise to no one acquainted with the commercial history of those days to hear, that in little more than five years' time, Mr. Dudley could "write himself worth" 20,000*l.* He practised a parsimony of the most excruciating kind. Though every one on 'Change was familiar with his name, and cited him as one of the most "rising young men there," he never associated with any one of them but on occasions of strict business. He was content with the humblest fare; and trudged cheerfully to and from the city to his quiet quarters near Hackney, as if he had been but a clerk luxuriating on an income of 50*l.* per

annum. Matters went on thus prospering with him till his thirty-second year, when he married the wealthy widow of a ship-builder. The influence which she had in his future fortunes warrants me in pausing to describe her. She was about twenty-seven or twenty-eight years old; of passable person, as far as figure went, for her face was rather bloated and vulgar; somewhat of a dowdy in dress; insufferably vain, and fond of extravagant display; a termagant; with little or no intellect. In fact, she was the perfect antipodes of her husband. Mr. Dudley was an humble, unobtrusive, kind-hearted man, always intent on business, beyond which he did not pretend to know or care for much. How could such a man, it will be asked, marry such a woman?—Was he the *first* who has been dazzled and blinded by the blaze of a large fortune? Such was his case. Besides, a young widow is somewhat careful of undue exposures, which might fright away promising suitors. So they made a match of it; and he resuscitated the expiring business and connexion of his predecessor, and conducted it with a skill and energy which in a short time opened upon him the flood-gates of fortune. Affluence poured in from all quarters; and he was every where called by his panting, but distanced competitors in the city, the "*fortunate*" Mr. Dudley.

One memorable day, four of his vessels richly freighted came, almost together, into port; and on the same day he made one of the most fortunate speculations in the funds which had been heard of for years; so that he was able to say to his assembled family, as he drank their healths after dinner, that he would not take *a quarter of a million* for what he was worth! And there, surely, he might have paused, nay, made his final stand, as the possessor of such a princely fortune, acquired with unsullied honour to himself, and, latterly, spent in warrantable splendour and hospitality. But no:

as is and ever will be the case, the more he had the more he would have. Not to mention the incessant baiting of his ambitious wife, the dazzling capabilities of indefinite increase to his wealth proved irresistible. *What* might not be done by a man of Mr. Dudleigh's celebrity, with a *floating* capital of some hundred and fifty thousand pounds, and as much credit as he chose to accept of? The regular course of his shipping business brought him in constantly magnificent returns, and he began to sigh after other collateral sources of money-making; for why should nearly one-half of his vast means lie unproductive? He had not long to look about, after it once became known that he was ready to employ his floating capital in profitable speculations. The brokers, for instance, came about him, and he leagued with them. By-and-by the world heard of a monopoly of nutmegs. There was not a score to be had anywhere in London, but at a most exorbitant price—for the fact was, that Mr. Dudleigh had laid his hands on them all, and by so doing cleared a very large sum. Presently he would play similar pranks with *otto of roses*; and as soon as he had quadrupled the cost of that fashionable article, he would let loose his stores on the gaping market—by which he gained as large a profit as he had made with the nutmegs. Commercial people will easily see how he did this. The brokers, who wished to effect the monopoly, would apply to him for the use of his capital, and give him an ample indemnity against whatever loss might be the fate of the speculation; and, on its proving successful, awarded him a very large proportion of the profits. This is the scheme by which many splendid fortunes have been raised, with a rapidity which has astonished their gainers as much as any one else! Then, again, he negotiated bills on a large scale, and at tremendous discounts; and, in a word, by these and similar means, amassed, in a few years, the enormous sum of half a million of money!



It is easy to guess at the concomitants of such a fortune as this. At the instigation of his wife—for he himself retained all his old unobtrusive and personally economical habits—he supported two splendid establishments—the one at the “West End” of the town, and the other near Richmond. His wife—for Mr. Dudleigh himself seemed more like the *hired steward* of his fortune than its possessor—was soon surrounded by swarms of those titled bloodsuckers that batten on bloated opulence which has been floated into the sea of fashion. Mrs. Dudleigh’s dinners, suppers, routes, *soirées*, *fêtes champêtres*, flashed astonishment on the town, through the columns of the obsequious prints. Miss Dudleigh, an elegant and really amiable girl, about seventeen, was beginning to get talked of as a fashionable beauty, and, report said, had refused her coronets by dozens! While “young Harry Dudleigh” far out-topped the astonished Oxonians, by spending about half as much again as his noble allowance. Poor Mr. Dudleigh frequently looked on all this with fear and astonishment, and, when in the city, would shrug his shoulders, and speak of the “*dreadful* doings at the West!” I say, when in the city,—for as soon as he travelled westward, when he entered the sphere of his wife’s influence, his energies were benumbed and paralyzed. He had too long quietly succumbed to her authority to call it in question now, and therefore he submitted to the splendid appearance he was compelled to support. He often said, however, that “he could not understand what Mrs. Dudleigh *was at* ;” but beyond such a hint he never presumed. He was seldom or never to be seen amid the throng and crush of company that crowded his house evening after evening. The first arrival of his wife’s guests was his usual signal for seizing his hat and stick, dropping quietly from home, and betaking himself either to some sedate city friend, or to his country-house, where he now took a kind of morbid pleasure in ascertaining that his gains were safe, and planning

greater, to make up if possible, he would say, "for Mrs. Dudleigh's awful extravagance." He did this so constantly, that Mrs. Dudleigh began, almost to *expect* and calculate on his absence, as a matter of course, whenever she gave a party; and her good-natured, accommodating husband too easily acquiesced, on the ground, as his wife took care to give out, of his *health's* not bearing late hours and company. Though an economical, and even parsimonious man in his habits, Mr. Dudleigh had as warm and kind a heart, as ever glowed in the breast of man. I have heard many accounts of his systematic benevolence, which he chiefly carried into effect at the periods of temporary *relegation* to the city, above spoken of. Every Saturday evening, for instance, he had a sort of *levee* numerously attended by merchants' clerks and commencing tradesmen, all of whom he assisted most liberally with both "cash and counsel," as he good-humouredly called it. Many a one of them owes his establishment in life to Mr. Dudleigh, who never lost sight of any deserving object he had once served.

A far different creature Mrs. Dudleigh! The longer she lived, the more she had her way, the more frivolous and heartless did she become—the more despotic was the sway she exercised over her husband. Whenever he presumed to "lecture her," as she called it, she would stop his mouth, with referring to the fortune she had brought him, and ask him triumphantly, "what he could have done without her cash and connexions!" Such being the fact, it was past all controversy that she ought to be allowed "to have her *fling*, now they could so easily afford it!" The sums she spent on her own and her daughter's dress were absolutely incredible, and almost petrified her poor husband when the bills were brought to him. Both in the articles of dress and party-giving, Mrs. Dudleigh was actuated by a spirit

of frantic rivalry with her competitors; and what she wanted in elegance and refinement, she sought to compensate for in extravagance and ostentation. It was to no purpose that her trembling husband, with tears in his eyes, suggested to her recollection the old saying, "that fools make feasts, and wise men eat them;" and that, if she gave magnificent dinners and suppers, of course great people would come and eat them for her; but would they thank her? Her constant answer was, that they "ought to support their station in society"—that "the world would not believe them rich, unless they showed it that they were," &c. &c. Then, again, she had a strong plea for her enormous expenditure in the "bringing out of Miss Dudleigh," in the arrayment of whom panting milliners "toiled in vain." In order to bring about this latter object, she induced, but with great difficulty, Mr. Dudleigh to give his bankers orders to accredit her separate checks; and so prudently did she avail herself of this privilege for months that she completely threw Mr. Dudleigh off his guard, and he allowed a very large balance to lie in his bankers' hands, subject to the unrestricted drafts of his wife. Did the reader never happen to see in society that horrid harpy, an old dowager, whose niggard jointure drives her to cards? Evening after evening did several of these old creatures squat, toad-like, round Mrs. Dudleigh's card-table, and succeeded at last in inspiring her with such a phrensy for "PLAY," as the most ample fortune must melt away under, more rapidly than snow beneath sunbeams. The infatuated woman became notoriously the first to seek, and last to leave the fatal card-table; and the reputed readiness with which she "bled" at last brought her the honour of an old countess, who condescended to win from her, at two sittings, very nearly 5000*l*. It is not now difficult to account for the anxiety Mrs. Dudleigh manifested to banish her husband from her

parties. She had many ways of satisfactorily accounting for her frequent drafts on his bankers. Miss Dudleigh had made a conquest of a young peer, who, as soon as he had accurately ascertained the reality of her vast expectations, fell deeply in love with her! The young lady herself had too much good sense to give him spontaneous credit for disinterested affection; but she was so dunned on the subject by her foolish mother, so petted and flattered by the noble but impoverished family that sought her connexion, and the young nobleman, himself a handsome man, so ardent and persevering in his courtship, that at last her heart yielded, and she passed in society as the "envied object" of his affections! The notion of intermingling their blood with NOBILITY so dazzled the *vain* imagination of Mrs. Dudleigh, that it gave her eloquence enough to succeed, at last, in stirring the phlegmatic temperament of her husband. "Have a *nobleman* for MY SON-IN-LAW!" thought the merchant, morning, noon, and night; at the East and at the West end—in town and country! What would the city people say to that? He had a spice of ambition in his composition beyond what could be contented with the achievement of mere city eminence. He was tiring of it;—he had long been a kind of *king* on 'Change, and, as it were, carried the stocks in his pockets. He had long thought that it was "possible to choke a dog with pudding," and he was growing heartily wearied of the turtle and venison eastward of Temple-Bar, which he was compelled to eat at the public dinners of the great companies, and elsewhere, when his own tastes would have led him, in every case, to pitch upon "port, beef-steaks, and the papers," as fare fit for a king! The dazzling topic, therefore, in which his wife held forth with unwearied eloquence, was beginning to produce conviction in his mind; and though he himself eschewed his wife's kind of life, and refused to share in it, he did not lend a very

unwilling ear to representations of the necessity for an even increased rate of expenditure, to enable Miss Dudleigh to eclipse her gay competitors, and appear a worthy prize in the eyes of her noble suitor. Aware of the magnitude of the proposed object, he could not but assent to Mrs. Dudleigh's opinion, that extraordinary means must be made use of; and was at last persuaded into placing nearly 20,000*l.* in his new banker's hands, subject, as before, to Mrs. Dudleigh's drafts, which she promised him should be as seldom and as moderate as she could possibly contrive to meet necessary expenses with. His many and heavy expenses, together with the great sacrifice in prospect, when the time of his daughter's marriage should arrive, supplied him with new incentives to enter into commercial speculations. He tried several new schemes, threw all the capital he could command into new and even more productive quarters, and calculated on making vast accessions of fortune at the end of the year.

About a fortnight after Mr. Dudleigh had informed Mrs. Dudleigh of the new lodgment he had made at his banker's, she gave a very large evening-party at her house, in — Square. She had been very successful in her guests on the occasion, having engaged the attendance of my Lords *This*, and my Ladies *That*, innumerable. Even the high and haughty Duke of — had deigned to look in for a few moments, on his way to a party at Carlton House, for the purpose of sneering at the "splendid cit," and extracting topics of laughter for his royal host. The whole of — Square and one or two of the adjoining streets were absolutely choked with carriages—the carriages of *her* guests! When you entered her magnificent apartments, and had made your way through the soft crush and flutter of aristocracy, you might see the lady of the house throbbing and panting with excitement—a perfect blaze of jewellery—flanked by her kind friends, old Lady —,

and the well-known Miss —, engaged, as usual, at unlimited loo. The good-humour with which Mrs. Dudleigh lost was declared to be “quite charming”—“deserving of better fortune;” and, inflamed by the *cozened* compliments they forced upon her, she was just uttering some sneering and insolent allusion to “that odious city,” while old Lady —’s withered talons were extended to clutch her winnings, when there was perceived a sudden stir about the chief door—then a general hush—and in a moment or two, a gentleman, in dusty and disordered dress, with his hat on, rushed through the astonished crowd, and made his way towards the card-table at which Mrs. Dudleigh was seated, and stood confronting her, extending towards her his right hand, in which was a thin slip of paper. It was Mr. Dudleigh! “There—there, madam,” he gasped, in a hoarse voice,—“there, woman!—what have you done?—Ruined—ruined me, madam, you’ve *ruined* me! My credit is destroyed for ever!—my name is tainted!—Here’s the first dishonoured bill that ever bore Henry Dudleigh’s name upon it!—Yes, madam, it is you who have done it,” he continued, with vehement tone and gesture, utterly regardless of the breathless throng around him, and continuing to extend towards her the protested bill of exchange.

“My dear!—my dear—my—my dear Mr. Dudleigh,” stammered his wife, without rising from her chair, “what is the matter, love?”

“*Matter*, madam?—why, by —!—that you’ve ruined me—that’s all!—Where’s the 20,000*l.* I placed in Messrs —’s hands a few days ago?—Where—WHERE is it, Mrs. Dudleigh?” he continued, almost shouting, and advancing nearer to her, with his fist clenched.

“Henry! dear Henry!—mercy, mercy!” murmured his wife faintly.

“Henry, indeed! *Mercy*?—Silence, madam! How dare you deny me an answer? How *dare* you swindle

me out of my fortune in this way?" he continued fiercely, wiping the perspiration from his forehead. "Here's my bill for 4000*l.*, made payable at Messrs. —, my new bankers; and when it was presented this morning, madam, by —, the reply was '**no EFFECTS!**'—and my bill has been dishonoured!—Wretch! *what* have you done with my money? Where's it all gone?—I'm the town's talk about this — bill!—There'll be a run upon me!—I know there will—ay, **THIS** is the way my hard-earned wealth is squandered, you vile, you unprincipled spend-thrift!" he continued, turning round and pointing to the astonished guests, none of whom had uttered a syllable. The music had ceased—the dancers left their places—the card-tables were deserted: in a word, all was blank consternation. The fact was, that old Lady —, who was that moment seated, trembling like an aspen-leaf, at Mrs. Dudleigh's right-hand side, had won from her, during the last month, a series of sums amounting to little short of 9000*l.*, which Mrs. Dudleigh had paid the day before by a check on her banker; and that very morning she had drawn out 4000*l.* odd, to pay her coach-maker's, confectioner's, and milliner's bills, and supply herself with cash for the evening's spoliation. The remaining 7000*l.* had been drawn out during the preceding fortnight to pay her various clamorous creditors, and keep her in readiness for the gaming-table. Mr. Dudleigh, on hearing of the dishonour of his bill—the news of which was brought him by a clerk, for he was staying at a friend's house in the country—came up instantly to town, paid the bill, and then hurried, half beside himself, to his house in — Square. It is not at all wonderful, that though Mr. Dudleigh's name was well known as an eminent and responsible mercantile man, his bankers, with whom he had but recently opened an account, should decline paying his bill, after so large a sum as 20,000*l.* had been drawn out of their

hands by Mrs. Dudleigh. It looked suspicious enough, truly!

"Mrs. Dudleigh! where—WHERE is my 20,000*l.*?" he shouted, almost at the top of his voice; but Mrs. Dudleigh heard him not; for she had fallen fainting into the arms of Lady —. Numbers rushed forward to her assistance. The confusion and agitation that ensued it would be impossible to describe; and, in the midst of it, Mr. Dudleigh strode at a furious pace out of the room, and left the house. For the next three or four days he behaved like a madman. His apprehensions magnified the temporary and very trifling injury his credit had sustained, till he fancied himself on the eve of becoming bankrupt. And, indeed, where is the merchant of any eminence whom such a circumstance as the dishonour of a bill for 4000*l.* (however afterward accounted for) would not exasperate? For several days Mr. Dudleigh would not go near — Square, and did not once inquire after Mrs. Dudleigh. My professional services were put into requisition on her behalf. Rage, shame, and agony at the thought of the disgraceful exposure she had met with in the eyes of all her assembled guests, of those respecting whose opinions she was most exquisitely sensitive, had nearly driven her distracted. She continued so ill for about a week, and exhibited such frequent glimpses of delirium, that I was compelled to resort to very active treatment to avert a brain fever. More than once I heard her utter the words, or something like them,—"*be revenged* on him yet!" but whether or not she was at the time sensible of the import of what she said, I did not know.

The incident above recorded—which I had from the lips of Mr. Dudleigh himself, as well as from others—made a good deal of noise in what are called "the fashionable circles," and was obscurely hinted at in one of the daily papers. I was much amused at hearing, in the various circles I visited, the con-



ficting and exaggerated accounts of it. One old lady told me she "had it on the best authority, that Mr. Dudleigh actually *struck* his wife, and wrenched her purse out of her hand!" I recommended Mrs. Dudleigh to withdraw for a few weeks to a watering-place, and she followed my advice; taking with her Miss Dudleigh, whose health and spirits had suffered materially through the event which has been mentioned. Poor girl! she was of a very different mould from her mother, and suffered acutely, though silently, at witnessing the utter contempt in which she was held by the very people she made such prodigious efforts to court and conciliate. Can any situation be conceived more painful? Her few and gentle remonstrances, however, met invariably with a harsh and cruel reception; and at last she was compelled to hold her peace, and bewail in mortified silence her mother's obtuseness.

They continued at — about a month; and on their return to town, found the affair quite "blown over;" and soon afterward, through the mediation of mutual friends, the angry couple were reconciled to each other. For twelve long months Mrs. Dudleigh led a comparatively quiet and secluded life, abstaining, with but a poor grace it is true, from company and cards—from the latter compulsorily; for no one chose to sit down at play with her who had witnessed or heard of the event which had taken place last season. In short, every thing seemed going on well with our merchant and his family. It was fixed that his daughter was to become Lady —, as soon as young Lord — should have returned from the Continent; and a dazzling dowry was spoken of as hers on the day of her marriage. Pleased with his wife's good behaviour, Mr. Dudleigh's confidence and good-nature revived, and he held the reins with a rapidly slackening grasp. In proportion as he allowed her funds, her scared "friends" flocked again around her; and by-and-by

she was seen flouncing about in fashion as heretofore, with small "let or hindrance" from her husband. The world—the sagacious world called Mr. Dudleigh a happy man; and the city swelled at the mention of his name and doings. The mercantile world laid its highest honours at his feet. The mayoralty—a bank—an East Indian directorship—a seat for the city in parliament—all glittered within his grasp; but he would not stretch forth his hand. He was content, he would say, to be "plain Henry Dudleigh, whose word was as good as his bond"—a leading man on 'Change—and, above all, "who could look every one full in the face with whom he had ever had to do." He was indeed a worthy man—a rich and racy specimen of one of those glories of our nation—a true English merchant. The proudest moments of his life were those when an accompanying friend could estimate his consequence by witnessing the mandarin movements that every where met him—the obsequious obeisances of even his closest rivals—as he hurried to and fro about the central regions of 'Change, his hands stuck into the worn pockets of his plain snuff-coloured coat. The merest glance at Mr. Dudleigh—his hurried, fidgety, anxious gestures—the keen, cautious expression of his glittering gray eyes—his mouth screwed up like a shut purse—all, all told of the "man of a million." There was, in a manner, a "plum" in every tread of his foot, in every twinkle of his eye. He could never be said to breathe freely—really to *live*—but in his congenial atmosphere—his native element—the city!

Once every year he gave a capital dinner, at a tavern, to all his agents, clerks, and people in any way connected with him in business; and none but himself knew the quiet ecstacy with which he took his seat at the head of them all, joined in their timid jokes, echoed their modest laughter, made speeches, and was bespeecified in turn! How he sat while

great things were saying of him, on the occasion of his health's being drunk! On one of these occasions his health had been proposed by his sleek head-clerk, in a most neat and appropriate speech, and drunk with uproarious enthusiasm; and good Mr. Dudleigh was on his legs, energetically making his annual avowal that "that was the proudest moment of his life," when one of the waiters came and interrupted him, by saying that a gentleman was without, waiting to speak to him on most important business. Mr. Dudleigh hurriedly whispered that he would attend to the stranger in a few minutes, and the waiter withdrew; but returned in a second or two, and put a card into his hand. Mr. Dudleigh was electrified at the name it bore—that of the great loan contractor—the city Cræsus, whose wealth was reported to be incalculable! He hastily called on some one to supply his place; and had hardly passed the door before he was hastily shaken by the hands by —, who told him at once that he had called to propose to Mr. Dudleigh to take part with him in negotiating a very large loan on account of the — government! After a flurried pause, Mr. Dudleigh, scarce knowing what he was saying, assented. In a day or two the transaction was duly blazoned in the leading papers of the day; and every one in the city spoke of him as one likely to double or even treble his already ample fortune. Again he was praised—again censured—again envied! It was considered advisable that he should repair to the Continent, during the course of the negotiation, in order that he might personally superintend some important collateral transactions; and when there, he was most unexpectedly detained nearly two months. Alas! that he ever left England! During his absence, his infatuated wife betook herself—"like the dog to his vomit, like a sow to her wallowing in the mire"—to her former ruinous courses of extravagance and dissipation, but on a fearfully

larger scale. Her house was more like an hotel than a private dwelling; and blazed away, night after night, with light and company, till the whole neighbourhood complained of the incessant uproar occasioned by the mere arrival and departure of her guests. To her other dreadful besetments Mrs. Dudleigh now added the odious and vulgar vice of—intoxication! She complained of the deficiency of her animal spirits; and said she took liquor as a *medicine*! She required stimulus and excitement, she said, to sustain her mind, under the perpetual run of ill luck she had at cards! It was in vain that her poor daughter remonstrated, and almost cried herself into fits, on seeing her mother return home frequently in the dull stupor of absolute intoxication!—"Mother, mother, my heart is breaking!" said she one evening.

"So—so is mine," hiccoughed her parent; "so get me the decanter!"

Young Harry Dudleigh trod emulously in the footsteps of his mother; and ran riot to an extent that was before unknown to Oxford!—The sons of very few of the highest nobility had handsomer allowances than he; yet was he constantly over head and ears in debt. He was a backer of the ring ruffians; a great man at cock and dog fights; a racer: in short, a blackguard of the first water. During the recess, he had come up to town, and taken up his quarters, not at his father's house, but at one of the distant hotels, where he might pursue his profligate courses without fear of interruption. He had repeatedly bullied his mother out of large sums of money to supply his infamous extravagances; and at length became so insolent and exorbitant in his demands, that they quarrelled. One evening, about nine o'clock, Mrs. and Miss Dudleigh happened to be sitting in the drawing-room, alone—and the latter was pale with the agitation consequent on some recent quarrel with her mother; for the

poor girl had been passionately reproaching her mother for her increasing attachment to liquor, under the influence of which she evidently was at that moment. Suddenly a voice was heard in the hall, and on the stairs, singing, or rather bawling, snatches of some comic song or other; the drawing-room door was presently pushed open, and young Dudleigh, more than half intoxicated, made his appearance, in a slovenly evening dress.

"Madame ma mère!" said he, staggering towards the sofa where his mother and sister were sitting, "I—I *must* be supplied—I must, mother!"—he hiccoughed, stretching towards her his right hand, and tapping the palm of it significantly with his left fingers.

"Pho—nonsense!—off to—to bed, young scapegrace!" replied his mother, drowsily—for the stupor of wine lay heavily on her.

"'Tis useless, madam—quite, I assure you!—money—money—money I must and will have!" said her son, striving to steady himself against a chair.

"Why, Harry, dear!—where's the fifty pounds I gave you a check for only a day or two ago?"

"Gone! gone! the way of all money, madam—as you know pretty well! I—I *must* have 300*l.* by to-morrow—"

"*Three hundred pounds*, Henry!" exclaimed his mother, angrily.

"Yes, ma'am! Sir Charles won't be put off any longer, he says. Has my—my word—'good as my bond', as the old governor says!—Mother," he continued in a louder tone, flinging his hat violently on the floor, "I must and will have money!"

"Henry—it's disgraceful—infamous—most infamous!" exclaimed Miss Dudleigh, with a shocked air; and raising her handkerchief to her eyes, she rose from the sofa, and walked hurriedly to the opposite end of the room, and sat down in tears. Poor girl! what a mother! what a brother!—The

young man took the place she had occupied by her mother's side, and in a wheedling, coaxing way, threw his arm round Mrs. Dudleigh, hiccoughing, "Mother, give me a check! do, please!—'tis the last time I'll ask you—for a twelvemonth to come!—and I owe 50*l.* that *must* be paid in a day or two!"

"How can I, Harry?—dear Harry—don't be unreasonable! recollect I'm a kind mother to you," kissing him, "and don't distress me; for I owe three or four times as much myself, and cannot pay it."

"Eh!—eh!—cannot pay it?—stuff, ma'am!—why—is the bank run dry?" he continued, with an apprehensive stare.

"Yes, love—long ago!" replied his mother, with a sigh.

"Whoo—whoo!" he exclaimed; and rising, he walked, or rather staggered a few steps to and fro, as if attempting to collect his faculties—and think!

"Ah—ha, ha!—eureka, ma'am!" he exclaimed suddenly, after a pause, snapping his fingers; "I've got it—I have!—the *PLATE*, mother,—the plate!—hem! raising the wind—you understand me?"

"Oh! shocking, shocking!" sobbed Miss Dudleigh, hurrying towards them, wringing her hands bitterly; "oh mother! oh Henry, Henry! would you ruin my poor father, and break his heart?"

"Ah, the plate, mother!—the plate!" he continued, addressing his mother; then turning to his sister, "away, you little puss—puss!—what do *you* understand about business, eh?" and he attempted to kiss her; but she thrust him away with indignation and horror in her gestures.

"Come, mother!—will it do?—a lucky thought! the plate!—Mr. — is a rare hand at this kind of thing!—a thousand or two would set you and me to rights in a twinkling!—come, what say you?"

"Impossible, Harry!" replied his mother, turning pale; "'tis quite—'tis—'tis out of the question!"

"Pho! no such thing!—It *must* be done!—why

cannot it, ma'am?" inquired the young man earnestly.

"Why, because—if you *must* know, sirrah!—because it is **ALREADY** pawned!"—replied his mother, in a loud voice, shaking her hand at him with passion. Their attention was attracted at that moment towards the door, which had been standing ajar—for there was the sound of some one suddenly fallen down. After an instant's pause, they all three walked to the door, and stood gazing horrorstruck at the prostrate figure of Mr. DUDLEIGH!

He had been standing unperceived in the doorway—having entered the house only a moment or two after his son—during the whole of the disgraceful scene just described, almost petrified with grief, amazement, and horror—till he could bear it no longer, and fell down in an apoplectic fit. He had but that evening returned from abroad, exhausted with physical fatigue, and dispirited in mind: for while abroad, he had made a most disastrous move in the foreign funds, by which he lost upwards of sixty or seventy thousand pounds; and his negotiation scheme also turned out very unfortunately, and left him minus nearly as much more. He had hurried home, half-dead with vexation and anxiety, to make instant arrangements for meeting the most pressing of his pecuniary engagements in England, apprehensive, from the gloomy tenor of his agent's letters to him while abroad, that his affairs were falling into confusion. Oh! what a heart-breaking scene had he to encounter—instead of the comforts and welcome of home!

This incident brought me again into contact with this devoted family; for I was summoned by the distracted daughter to her father's bedside, which I found surrounded by his wife and children. The shock of his presence had completely sobered both mother and son, who hung horrorstricken over him, on each side of the bed, endeavouring in vain to

recall him to sensibility. I had scarce entered the room before Mrs. Dudleigh was carried away swooning in the arms of a servant. Mr. Dudleigh was in a fit of apoplexy. He lay in a state of profound stupor—breathing stentoriously—more like snorting. I had him raised into nearly an upright position, and immediately bled him largely from the jugular vein. While the blood was flowing, my attention was arrested by the appearance of young Dudleigh; who was kneeling down by the bedside, his hands clasped convulsively together, and his swollen blood-shot eyes fixed on his father. “Father! father! father!” were the only words he uttered, and these fell quivering from his lips unconsciously. Miss Dudleigh, who had stood leaning against the bedpost in stupified silence, and pale as a statue, was at length too faint to continue any longer in an upright posture, and was led out of the room.

Here was misery! Here was remorse!

I continued with my patient more than an hour, and was gratified at finding that there was every appearance of the attack proving a mild and manageable one. I prescribed suitable remedies, and left,—enjoining young Dudleigh not to quit his father for a moment, but to watch every breath he drew. He hardly seemed to hear me, and gazed in my face vacantly while I addressed him. I shook him gently, and repeated my injunctions; but all he could reply was, “Oh—doctor—we have killed him!”

Before leaving the house I repaired to the chamber where Mrs. Dudleigh lay, just recovering from strong hysterics. I was filled with astonishment, on reflecting upon the whole scene of that evening; and, in particular, on the appearance and remorseful expressions of young Dudleigh. What could have happened?—A day or two afterward, Miss Dudleigh, with shame and reluctance, communicated to me the chief facts above stated. Her own health and spirits were manifestly suffering from the dis-



tressing scenes she had to endure. She told me, with energy, that she could sink into the earth, on reflecting that she was the daughter of such a mother, the sister of such a brother!

[The Diary passes hastily over a fortnight—saying merely that Mr. Dudleigh recovered more rapidly than could have been expected—and proceeds:]

*Monday, June, 18—* While I was sitting beside poor Mr. Dudleigh, this afternoon, feeling his pulse, and putting questions to him, which he was able to answer with tolerable distinctness, Miss Dudleigh came and whispered that her mother—who, though she had seen her husband frequently, had not spoken to him or been recognised by him since his illness—was anxious then to come in, as she heard that he was perfectly sensible. I asked him if he had any objection to see her; and he replied, with a sigh, “No: let her come in, and see what she has brought me to!” In a few minutes’ time she was in the room. I observed Mr. Dudleigh’s eyes directed anxiously to the door before she entered; and the instant he saw her pallid features, and the languid exhausted air with which she advanced towards the bed, he lifted up his shaking hands, and beckoned towards her. His eyes filled with tears to overflowing, and he attempted to speak—but in vain. She tottered to his side, and fell down on her knees; while he clasped her hands in his, kissed her affectionately, and both of them wept like children; as did young Dudleigh and his sister. That was the hour of full forgiveness and reconciliation! It was indeed a touching scene. There lay the deeply injured father and husband, his gray hair, grown long during his absence on the Continent and his illness, combed back from his temples; his pale and fallen features exhibiting deep traces of the anguish he had borne. He gave one hand to his son and daughter, while the other continued grasped by Mrs. Dudleigh.

"Oh, dear, dear husband!—Can you forgive us, who have so nearly broken your heart?" she sobbed, kissing his forehead. He strove to reply, but burst into tears without being able to utter a word. Fearful that the prolonged excitement of such an interview might prove injurious, I gave Mrs. Dudleigh a hint to withdraw—and left the room with her. She had scarcely descended the staircase, when she suddenly seized my arm, stared me full in the face, and burst into a fit of loud and wild laughter. I carried her into the first room I could find, and gave her all the assistance in my power. It was long, however, before she recovered. She continually exclaimed, "Oh, what a wretch I've been! What a vile wretch I've been!—and he so kind and forgiving too?"

As soon as Mr. Dudleigh was sufficiently recovered to leave his bedroom—contrary to my vehemently expressed opinion—he entered at once on the active management of his affairs. It is easy to conceive how business of such an extensive and complicated character as his must have suffered from so long an intermission of his personal superintendence—especially at such a critical conjuncture. Though his head-clerk was an able and faithful man, he was not at all equal to the overwhelming task which devolved upon him; and when Mr. Dudleigh, the first day of his coming down stairs, sent for him, in order to learn the general aspect of his affairs, he wrung his hands despairingly, to find the lamentable confusion into which they had fallen. The first step to be taken was the discovery of funds wherewith to meet some heavy demands which had been for some time clamorously asserted. What, however, was to be done? His unfortunate speculations in the foreign funds had made sad havoc of his floating capital, and further fluctuations in the English funds during his illness had added to his losses. As far as *ready money* went, therefore, he was comparatively

penniless. All his resources were so locked up as to be promptly available only at ruinous sacrifices; and yet he *must* procure many thousands within a few days—or he trembled to contemplate the consequences.

“Call in the money I advanced on mortgage of my Lord ——’s property,” said he.

“We shall lose a third, sir, of what we advanced, if we do,” replied the clerk.

“Can’t help it, sir; *must* have money, and that instantly: call it in, sir.” The clerk, with a sigh, entered his orders accordingly.

“Ah—let me see. Sell all my shares in ——.”

“Allow me to suggest, sir, that if you will but wait two months, or even six weeks longer, they will be worth twenty times what you gave for them; whereas if you part with them at present, it must be at a heavy discount.”

“*Must* have money, sir!—*must*!—write it down too,” replied Mr. Dudleigh, sternly. In this manner he “ticketed out his property for ruin,” as his clerk said, throughout the interview. His demeanour and spirit were altogether changed; the first was become stern and imperative, the latter rash and inconsiderate, to a degree which none would credit who had known his former mode of conducting business. All the prudence and energy which had secured him such splendid results seemed now lost, irrevocably lost. Whether or not this change was to be accounted for by mental imbecility consequent on his recent apoplectic seizure, or the disgust he felt at toiling in the accumulation of wealth which had been and might yet be so profligately squandered, I know not; but his conduct now consisted of alternations between the extremes of rashness and timorous indecision. He would waver and hesitate about the outlay of hundreds, when every one else, even those most proverbially prudent and sober, would venture their thousands with an almost absolute certainty of

tenfold profits; and again would fling away thousands into the very yawning jaws of villany. He would not tolerate remonstrance or expostulation; and when any one ventured to hint surprise or dissatisfaction at the conduct he was pursuing, he would say tartly, "that he had reasons of his own for what he was doing." His brother merchants were for a length of time puzzled to account for his conduct. At first they gave him credit for playing some deep and desperate game, and trembled at his hardihood; but after waiting a while, and perceiving no

———"wondrous issue  
Leap down their gaping throats, to recompense  
Long hours of patient hope,"

they came to the conclusion, that as he had been latterly unfortunate, and was growing old, and indisposed to prolong the doubtful cares of money-making, he had determined to draw his affairs into as narrow a compass as possible, with a view to withdrawing altogether from active life, on a handsome independence. Every one commended his prudence in so acting—in "letting well alone." "Easy come, easy go," is an old saw, but signally characteristic of rapidly acquired commercial fortunes; and by these and similar prudential considerations did they consider Mr. Dudleigh to be actuated. This latter supposition was strengthened by observing the other parts of his conduct. His domestic arrangements indicated a spirit of rigorous retrenchment. His house near Richmond was advertised for sale, and bought "out and out" by a man who had grown rich in Mr. Dudleigh's service. Mrs. Dudleigh gave, received, and accepted fewer and fewer invitations; was less seen at public places; and drove only one plain chariot. Young Dudleigh's allowance at Oxford was curtailed, and narrowed down to 300*l.* a-year; and he was forbidden to go abroad, that he

might stay at home to prepare for—orders! There was nothing questionable or alarming in all this, even to the most forward quidnuncs of the city. The world that had blazoned and lauded his—or rather his *family's*—extravagance, now commended his judicious economy. As for himself personally, he had resumed his pristine clock-work punctuality of movements; and the only difference to be perceived in his behaviour was an air of unceasing thoughtfulness and reserve. This was accounted for by the rumoured unhappiness he endured in his family—for which Mrs. Dudleigh was given ample credit. And then his favourite—his idolized child—Miss Dudleigh—was exhibiting alarming symptoms of ill health. She was notoriously neglected by her young and noble suitor, who continued abroad much longer than the period he had himself fixed on. She was of too delicate and sensitive a character to bear with indifference the impertinent and cruel speculations which this occasioned in “society.” When I looked at her—her beauty, her amiable and fascinating manners—her high accomplishments—and, in many conversations, perceived the superior feelings of her soul—it was with difficulty I brought myself to believe that she was the offspring of such a miserably inferior woman as her mother! To return, however, to Mr. Dudleigh. He who has once experienced an attack of apoplexy ought never to be entirely from under medical *surveillance*. I was in the habit of calling upon him once or twice a-week to ascertain how he was going on. I observed a great change in him. Though never distinguished by high animal spirits, he seemed now under the influence of a permanent and increasing melancholy. When I would put to him some such matter-of-fact question as, “How goes the world with you now, Mr. Dudleigh?” he would reply, with an air of lassitude, “Oh—as it *ought*! as it ought!” He ceased to speak of his mercantile transactions

with spirit or energy; and it was only by a visible *effort* that he dragged himself into the city.

When a man is once on the *inclined plane* of life—once fairly “going down hill,” one push will do as much as fifty; and such a one poor Mr. Dudleigh was not long in receiving. Rumours were already flying about that his credit had no more substantial support than *paper* props; in other words, that he was obliged to resort to accommodation-bills to meet his engagements. When once such reports are current and accredited, I need hardly say that it is “all up” with a man in the city. And ought it not to be so? I observed, a little while ago, that Mr. Dudleigh, since his illness, conducted his affairs very differently from what he had formerly. He would freight his vessels with unmarketable cargoes—in spite of all the representations of his servants and friends; and when his advices confirmed the truth of their surmises, he would order the goods to be sold off—frequently at a fifth or eighth of their value. These and many similar freaks becoming generally known, soon alienated from him the confidence even of his oldest connexions; credit was given him reluctantly, and then only to a small extent—and sometimes even point-blank refused! He bore all this with apparent calmness, observing simply that “times were altered!” Still he had a *corps de reserve* in his favourite investiture—mortgages: a species of security in which he had long had locked up some forty or fifty thousand pounds. Anxious to assign a mortgage for 15,000*l.*, he had at last succeeded in finding an assignee on advantageous terms, whose solicitor, after carefully inspecting the deed, pronounced it so much wastepaper, owing to some great technical flaw, or informality, which vitiated the whole! Poor Mr. Dudleigh hurried with consternation to his attorney; who, after a long show of incredulity, at last acknowledged the existence of the defect! Under his advice, Mr. Dudleigh

instantly wrote to the party whose property was mortgaged, frankly informing him of the circumstances, and appealing to his "honour and good feeling." He might as well have appealed to the winds! for he received a reply from the mortgager's attorney, stating simply, that "his client was prepared to stand or fall by the deed, and so, of course, must the mortgager!" What was Mr. Dudleigh's further dismay at finding, on further examination, that every mortgage transaction, except one for 1500*l.*, which had been intrusted to the management of the same attorney, was equally, or even more invalid than the one above-mentioned!—Two of the heaviest proved to be worthless, as *second* mortgages of the same property, and all the remainder were invalid on account of divers defects and informalities. It turned out that Mr. Dudleigh had been in the hands of a swindler, who had intentionally committed the draft error, and colluded with his principal, to outwit his unsuspecting client Mr. Dudleigh, in the matter of the double mortgages! Mr. Dudleigh instantly commenced actions against the first mortgager, to recover the money he had advanced, in spite of the flaw in the mortgage-deed, and against the attorney through whose villany he had suffered so severely. In the former, which of course decided the fate of the remaining mortgages similarly situated, he failed; in the latter he succeeded—as far as the bare gaining of a verdict could be so considered; but the attorney, exasperated at being brought before the court and exposed by his client, defended the action in such a manner as did himself no good, at the same time that it nearly ruined the poor plaintiff; for he raked up every circumstance that had come to his knowledge professionally during the course of several years' confidential connexion with Mr. Dudleigh—and which could possibly be tortured into a disreputable shape; and gave his foul brief into the hands of an ambitious young counsel, who, faith-

ful to his instructions, and eager to make the most of so rich an opportunity of vituperative declamation, contrived so to blacken poor Mr. Dudleigh's character, by cunning, cruel innuendoes, asserting nothing, but *suggesting* every thing vile and atrocious—that poor Mr. Dudleigh, who was in court at the time, began to think himself, in spite of himself, one of the most execrable scoundrels in existence—and hurried home in a paroxysm of rage, agony, and despair, which, but for my being opportunely sent for by Mrs. Dudleigh, and bleeding him at once, must in all probability have induced a second and fatal apoplectic seizure. His energies, for weeks afterward, lay in a state of complete stagnation; and I found he was sinking into the condition of an irrecoverable hypochondriac. Every thing, from that time, went wrong with him. He made no provision for the payment of his regular debts; creditors precipitated their claims from all quarters; and he had no resources to fall back upon at a moment's exigency. Some of the more forbearing of his creditors kindly consented to give him time, but the small fry pestered him to distraction; and at last one of the latter class, a rude, hard-hearted fellow, cousin to the attorney whom Mr. Dudleigh had recently prosecuted, on receiving the requisite "denial," instantly went and struck the docket against his unfortunate debtor, and Mr. Dudleigh—the celebrated Mr. Dudleigh became a—BANKRUPT!

For some hours after he had received an official notification of the event he seemed completely stunned. He did not utter a syllable when first informed of it; but his face assumed a ghastly paleness. He walked to and fro about the room—now pausing—then hurrying on—then pausing again, striking his hands on his forehead, and exclaiming, with an abstracted and incredulous air, "A bankrupt! a bankrupt! *Henry Dudleigh* a bankrupt! What are they saying on 'Change!"—In subsequently



describing to me his feelings at this period, he said he felt as though he had "fallen into his grave for an hour or two, and come out again cold and stupified."

While he was in this state of mind, his daughter entered the room, wan and trembling with agitation.

"My dear little love, what's wrong? What's wrong, eh? What has dashed you, my sweet flower, eh?" said he, folding her in his arms, and hugging her to his breast. He led her to a seat, and placed her on his knee. He passed his hand over her pale forehead. "What have you been about to-day, Agnes? You've forgotten to dress your hair to-day," taking her raven tresses in his fingers; "come, these must be curled! They are all damp, love! What makes you cry?"

"My dear, dear, dear, darling father!" sobbed the agonized girl, almost choked with her emotions—clasping her arms convulsively round his neck, "I love you dearer—a thousand times—than I ever loved you in my life!"

"My sweet love!" he exclaimed, bursting into tears. Neither of them spoke for several minutes.

"You are young, Agnes, and may be happy—but as for me, I am an old tree, whose roots are rotten! The blasts have beaten me down, my darling!" She clung closer to him, but spoke not. "Agnes, will you stay with me, now that I'm made a—a beggar? Will you? I can *love* you yet—but that's all!" said he, staring vacantly at her. After a pause, he suddenly released her from his knee, rose from his seat, and walked hurriedly about the room.

"Agnes, love! Why, is it true—is it really *TRUE* that I'm made a *bankrupt* of, after all? And is it come to that?" He resumed his seat, covered his face with his hands, and wept like a child. "'Tis for *you*, my darling—for my family—my children, that I grieve! What is to become of you?" Again he paused. "Well! it cannot be helped—it is more my misfortune than my fault! God knows, I've

tried to pay my way as I went on—and—and—no, no! it doesn't follow that every man is a *villain* that's a bankrupt!"

"No, no, no, father!" replied his daughter, again flinging her arms round his neck, and kissing him with passionate fondness; "your honour is untouched—it is—"

"Ay, love—but to make the *world* think so—*There's* the rub! What has been said on 'Change to-day, Agnes? That's what hurts me to my soul!"

\* \* "Come, father, be calm! We shall yet be happy and quiet, after this little breeze has blown over! Oh yes, yes, father! We will remove to a nice little comfortable house, and live among ourselves!"

"But, Agnes, can you do all this? Can *you* make up your mind to live in a lower rank—to—to—to be, in a manner, your own servant?"

"Yes, God knows I can! Father, I'd rather be your servant-girl, than wife of the king!" replied the poor girl, with enthusiasm.

"Oh, my daughter!—Come, come, let us go into the next room, and do you play me my old favourite—'*O Nanny, wilt thou gang wi' me.*' You'll feel it, Agnes!" He led her into the adjoining room, and set her down at the instrument, and stood by her side.

"We must not part with this piano, my love,—must we?" said he, putting his arms round her neck, "we'll try and have it saved from the wreck of our furniture!" She commenced playing the tune he had requested, and went through it.

"Sing, love—sing!" said her father. "I love the words as much as the music! Would you cheat me, you little rogue?" She made him no reply, but went on playing, very irregularly, however.

"Come! you *must* sing, Agnes."

"I can't!" she murmured. "My heart is breaking! My—my—bro—" and fell fainting into the

arms of her father. He rung instantly for assistance. In carrying her from the music-stool to the sofa, an open letter dropped from her bosom. Mr. Dudleigh hastily picked it up, and saw that the direction was in the handwriting of his son, and bore the "Wapping" postmark. The stunning contents were as follows:—"My dear, dear, dear Agnes, farewell! it may be *for ever*! I fly from my country! While you are reading this note I am on my way to America. Do not call me cruel, my sweet sister, for my heart is broken! broken! Yesterday, near Oxford, I fought with a man who dared to insult me about our family troubles. I am afraid—God forgive me—that I have killed him! Agnes, Agnes, the bloodhounds are after me! Even were they not, I could not bear to look on my poor father, whom I have helped to ruin, under the encouragement of one who might have bred me better! I cannot stay in England, for I have lost my station in society; I owe thousands I can never repay; besides Agnes, Agnes! the bloodhounds are after me! I scarce know what I am saying! Break all this to my father—my wretched father—as gradually as you can. Do not let him know of it for a *fortnight*, at least. May God be your friend, my dear Agnes! Pray for me! pray for me, my darling Agnes, yes, for me, your wretched, guilty, heart-broken brother. H. D."

"Ah! he might have done worse! he *might* have done worse," exclaimed the stupified father. "Well, I must think about it!" and he calmly folded up the letter, to put it into his pocket-book, when his daughter's eye caught sight of it, for she had recovered from her swoon while he was reading it; and with a faint shriek, and a frantic effort to snatch it from him, she fell back, and swooned again. Even all this did not rouse Mr. Dudleigh. He sat still, gazing on his daughter with a vacant stare, and did not make the slightest effort to assist her recovery

I was summoned in to attend her, for she was so ill that they carried her up to bed.

Poor girl, poor Agnes Dudleigh ! already had consumption marked her for his own ! The reader may possibly recollect, that in a previous part of this narrative Miss Dudleigh was represented to be affianced to a young nobleman. I need hardly, I suppose, inform him that the "affair" was "all off," as soon as ever Lord —— heard of her fallen fortunes. To do him justice, he behaved in the business with perfect politeness and condescension ; wrote to her from Italy, carefully returning her all her letters ; spoke of her admirable qualities in the handsomest strain ; and, in choice and feeling language, regretted the altered state of his affections, and that the "fates had ordained their separation." A few months afterward, the estranged couple met casually in Hyde Park, and Lord —— passed Miss Dudleigh with a strange stare of irrecognition, that showed the advances he had made in the command of manner ! She had been really attached to him, for he was a young man of handsome appearance, and elegant, winning manners. The only things he wanted were a head and a heart ! This circumstance, added to the perpetual harassment of domestic sorrows, had completely undermined her delicate constitution ; and her brother's conduct prostrated the few remaining energies that were left her.

But Mrs. Dudleigh has latterly slipped from our observation. I have little more to say about her. Aware that her own infamous conduct had conducted to her husband's ruin, she had resigned herself to the incessant lashings of remorse, and was wasting away daily. Her excesses had long before sapped her constitution ; and she was now little else than a walking skeleton. She sat moping in her bedroom for hours together, taking little or no notice of what happened about her, and manifesting no interest in life. When, however, she heard of her son's fate—

the only person on earth she really loved—the intelligence smote her finally down. She never recovered from the stroke. The only words she uttered, after hearing of his departure for America, were, “wretched woman! guilty mother! I have done it all!” The serious illness of her poor daughter affected her scarce at all. She would sit at her bedside, and pay her every attention in her power, but it was rather in the spirit and manner of a hired nurse than a mother.

To return, however, to the “chief mourner”—Mr. Dudleigh. The attorney whom he had sued for his villany in the mortgage transactions, contrived to get appointed solicitor to the commission of bankruptcy sued out against Mr. Dudleigh; and he enhanced the bitterness and agony incident to the judicial proceedings he was employed to conduct, by the cruelty and insolence of his demeanour. He would not allow the slightest indulgence to the poor bankrupt whom he was selling out of house and home; but remorselessly seized on every atom of goods and furniture the law allowed him, and put the heart-broken, helpless family to all the inconvenience his malice could suggest. His conduct was, throughout, mean, tyrannical—even diabolical, in its contemptuous disregard of the best feelings of human nature. Mr. Dudleigh’s energies were too much exhausted to admit of remonstrance or resistance. The only evidence he gave of smarting under the man’s insolence, was, after enduring an outrageous violation of his domestic privacy—a cruel interference with the few conveniences of his dying daughter, and sick wife—when he suddenly touched the attorney’s arm, and in a low, broken tone of voice, said, “Mr. —, I am a poor heart-broken man, and have no one to avenge me, or you would not dare to do this”—and he turned away in tears!—The house and furniture in — Square, with every other item of property that was available, being disposed

of, on winding up the affairs it proved that the creditors could obtain a dividend of about fifteen shillings in the pound. So convinced were they of the unimpeached—the unimpeachable integrity of the poor bankrupt, that they not only spontaneously released him from all future claims, but entered into a subscription amounting to 2000*l.*, which they put into his hands, for the purpose of enabling him to recommence housekeeping, on a small scale, and obtain some permanent means of livelihood. Under their advice—or rather direction, for he was passive as an infant—he removed to a small house in Chelsea, and commenced business as a coal-merchant, or agent for the sale of coals, in a small and poor way, it may be supposed. His new house was very small, but neat, convenient, and situated in a quiet and creditable street. Yes, in a little one-storied house, with about eight square feet of garden frontage, resided the once wealthy and celebrated Mr. Dudleigh!

The very first morning after Mrs. Dudleigh had been removed to her new quarters, she was found dead in her bed: for the fatigues of changing her residence, added to the remorse and chagrin which had so long preyed upon her mind, had extinguished the last spark of her vital energies. When I saw her, which was not till the evening of the second day after her decease, she was lying in her coffin; and I shall not soon forget the train of instructive reflections elicited by the spectacle. Poor creature—her features looked indeed haggard and grief-worn!—Mr. Dudleigh wept over her remains like a child, and kissed the cold lips and hands, with the liveliest transports of regret. At length came the day of the funeral, as plain and unpretending a one as could be. At the pressing solicitations of Mr. Dudleigh, I attended her remains to the grave. It was an affecting thought that the daughter was left dying in the house from which her mother was

carried out to burial! Mr. Dudleigh went through the whole of the melancholy ceremony with a calmness—and even cheerfulness—which surprised me. He did not betray any emotion when leaving the ground, except turning to look into the grave, and exclaiming rather faintly—"Well—here we leave you, poor wife!" On our return home, about three o'clock in the afternoon, he begged to be left alone for a few minutes, with pen, ink, and paper, as he had some important letters to write—and requested me to wait for him, in Miss Dudleigh's room, where he would rejoin me, and accompany me part of my way up to town. I repaired, therefore, to Miss Dudleigh's chamber. She was sitting up, and dressed in mourning. The marble paleness of her even then beautiful features was greatly enhanced by contrast with the deep black drapery she wore. She reminded me of the snowdrop she had an hour or two before laid on the pall of her mother's coffin! Her beauty was fast withering away under the blighting influence of sorrow and disease! She reclined in an easy-chair, her head leaning on her small snowy hand, the taper fingers of which were half-concealed beneath her dark clustering uncurled tresses,

"Like a white rose glistening 'mid evening-gloom."

"How did he bear it?" she whispered, with a profound sigh, as soon as I had taken my place beside her. I told her that he had gone through the whole with more calmness and fortitude than could have been expected. "Ah! 'tis unnatural! He's grown strangely altered within these last few days, doctor! He never seems to *feel* any thing! His troubles have stunned his heart, I'm afraid! Don't you think he *looks* altered?"

"Yes, my love, he is *thinner*, certainly—"

"Ah—his hair is white!—He is old—he won't be long behind us!"

"I hope that now he is freed from the cares and distractions of business—"

"Doctor, is the grave deep enough for THREE?" inquired the poor girl, abruptly,—as if she had not heard me speaking. "Our family has been strangely desolated, doctor—has not it?—My mother gone; the daughter on her death-bed; the father wretched, and ruined; the son flown from his country—perhaps dead, or dying!—But it has all been our own fault—"

"You have nothing to accuse yourself of, Miss Dudleigh," said I. She shook her head, and burst into tears. This was the melancholy vein of our conversation, when Mr. Dudleigh made his appearance, in his black gloves, and crape-covered hat, holding two letters in his hand.

"Come, doctor," said he, rather briskly—"you've a long walk before you!—I'll accompany you part of the way, as I have some letters to put into the post."

"Oh, don't trouble yourself about that, Mr. Dudleigh!—I'll put them into the post, as I go by."

"No, no, thank you—thank you," he interrupted me, with rather an embarrassed air, I thought; "I've several other little matters to do—and we had better be starting." I rose, and took my leave of Miss Dudleigh. Her father put his arms round her neck, and kissed her very fondly. "Keep up your spirits, Agnes!—and see and get into bed as soon as possible—for you are quite exhausted!"—He walked towards the door. "Oh, bless your little heart, my love!" said he, suddenly returning to her, and kissing her more fondly, if possible, than before. "We shall not be apart long, I dare say!"

We set off on our walk towards town; and Mr. Dudleigh conversed with great calmness, speaking of his affairs even in an encouraging tone. At length we separated. "Remember me kindly to Mrs. —," said he, mentioning my wife's name, and shaking me warmly by the hand.

The next morning, as I sat at breakfast, making



out my daily list, my wife, who had one of the morning papers in her hand, suddenly let it fall, and looking palely at me, exclaimed, "Eh, surely—surely, my dear, this can never be—Mr. Dudleigh?"—I inquired what she meant,—and she pointed out the following paragraph:—

**"ATTEMPTED SUICIDE.**—Yesterday evening, an elderly gentleman, dressed in deep mourning, was observed walking for some time near the water-side, a little above Chelsea-Reach, and presently stepped on board one of the barges, and threw himself from the outer one into the river. Most providentially, this latter movement was seen by a boatman who was rowing past, and who succeeded, after some minutes, in seizing hold of the unfortunate person, and lifting him into the boat—but not till the vital spark seemed extinct. He was immediately carried to the public-house by the water-side, where prompt and judicious means were made use of—and with success. He is now lying at the ——— public-house,—but as there were no papers or cards about him, his name is at present unknown. The unfortunate gentleman is of middling stature, rather full make—of advanced years—his hair very gray,—and he wears a mourning ring on his left hand."

I rung the bell, ordered a coach, drew on my boots, and put on my walking-dress; and in a little more than three or four minutes was hurrying on my way to the house mentioned in the newspaper. A twopenny postman had the knocker in his hand at the moment of my opening the door, and put into my hand a paid letter, which I tore open as I drove along. Good God! it was from—Mr. Dudleigh. It afforded unequivocal evidence of the insanity which had led him to attempt his life. It was written in a most extravagant and incongruous strain, and acquainted me with the writer's intention to "bid farewell to his troubles that evening." It ended with informing me, that I was left a legacy in his will for

5000/.—and hoping, that when his poor daughter died, “I would see her magnificently buried.” By the time I had arrived at the house where he lay, I was almost fainting with agitation: and I was compelled to wait some minutes below, before I could sufficiently recover my self-possession. On entering the bedroom where he lay, I found him undressed, and fast asleep. There was no appearance whatever of discomposure in the features. His hands were clasped closely together—and in that position he had continued for several hours. The medical man who had been summoned in over-night, sat at his bedside, and informed me that his patient was going on as well as could be expected. The treatment he had adopted had been very judicious and successful; and I had no doubt, that when next Mr. Dudleigh awoke, he would feel little if any the worse for what he had suffered. All my thoughts were now directed to Miss Dudleigh; for I felt sure that if the intelligence had found its way to her, it must have destroyed her. I ran every inch of the distance between the two houses, and knocked gently at the door with my knuckles, that I might not disturb Miss Dudleigh. The servant-girl, seeing my discomposed appearance, would have created a disturbance, by shrieking, or making some other noise, had I not placed my fingers on her mouth, and in a whisper, asked how her mistress was. “Master went home with you, sir, did not he?” she inquired with an alarmed air.

“Yes, yes;” I replied hastily.

“Oh, I told Miss so! I told her so!” replied the girl, clasping her hands, and breathing freer.

“Oh, she has been uneasy about his not coming home last night—eh?—Ah—I thought so, this morning, and that is what has brought me here in such a hurry,” said I, as calmly as I could. After waiting down stairs to recover my breath a little, I repaired to Miss Dudleigh’s room. She was awake. The

moment I entered, she started up in bed,—her eyes straining, and her arms stretched towards me.

“My—my father!”—she gasped; and before I could open my lips, or even reach her side, she had fallen back in bed, and—as I thought—expired. She had swooned: and during the whole course of my experience, I never saw a swoon so long and closely resemble death. For more than an hour, the nurse, servant-girl, and I hung over her in agonizing and breathless suspense, striving to detect her breath—which made no impression whatever on the glass I from time to time held over her mouth. Her pulse fluttered and fluttered—feebler and feebler, till I could not perceive that it beat at all. “Well!” thought I, at last removing my fingers,—“you are gone, sweet Agnes Dudleigh, from a world that has but few as fair and good;” when a slight undulation of the breast, accompanied by a faint sigh, indicated slowly returning consciousness. Her breath came again, short and faint—but she did not open her eyes for some time after. \* \* \*

“Well, my sweet girl,” said I, presently observing her eyes fixed steadfastly on me; “why all this! What has happened? What is the matter with you?” and I clasped her cold fingers in my hand. By placing my ear so close to her lips that it touched them, I distinguished the sound, “My fa—father!”

“Well! And what of your father? He is just as usual, and sends his love to you.” Her eyes, as it were, dilated on me—her breath came quicker and stronger—and her frame vibrated with emotion. “He is coming home shortly, by—by—*four* o’clock this afternoon—yes, four o’clock at the latest. Thinking that a change of scene might revive his spirits, I prevailed on him last night to walk on with me home—and—and he slept at my house.” She did not attempt to speak, but her eye continued fixed on me with an unwavering look that searched my very soul! “My wife and Mr. Dudleigh will drive

down together," I continued, firmly, though my heart sunk within me at the thought of the improbability of such being the case; "and I shall return here by the time they arrive, and meet them. Come, come, Miss Dudleigh—this is weak—absurd!" said I, observing that what I said seemed to make no impression on her. I ordered some port wine and water to be brought, and forced a few teaspoonfuls into her mouth. They revived her, and I gave her more. In a word, she rapidly recovered from the state of uttermost exhaustion into which she had fallen; and before I left, she said solemnly to me, "Doctor——! If—if you have deceived me! If any thing dreadful has really, really——"

I left, half-distracted to think of the impossibility of fulfilling the promise I had made her, as well as of accounting satisfactorily for not doing so. What could I do? I drove rapidly homewards, and requested my wife to hurry down immediately to Miss Dudleigh, and pacify her with saying that her father was riding round with me, for the sake of exercise, and that we should come to her together; I then hurried through my few professional calls, and repaired to Mr. Dudleigh. To my unutterable joy and astonishment, I found him up, dressed—for his clothes had been drying all night—and sitting quietly by the fire, in company with the medical man. His appearance exhibited no traces whatever of the accident which had befallen him. But alas! on looking close at him—on examining his features—Oh, that eye! That smile! they told of departed reason!—I was gazing on an *idiot*! Oh, God! what was to become of Miss Dudleigh? How was I to bring father and daughter face to face? My knees smote together while I sat beside him! But it *must* be done, or Miss Dudleigh's life would be the forfeit! The only project I could hit upon for disguising the frightful state of the case was to hint to Miss Dudleigh, if she perceived any thing wild, or unusual in

his demeanour, that he was a little flustered with wine! But *what* a circumstance to communicate to the dying girl! And even if it succeeded, what would ensue on the next morning? Would it be *safe* to leave him with her? I was perplexed and confounded between all these painful conjectures and difficulties!

He put on his hat and great-coat, and we got into my chariot together. He was perfectly quiet and gentle, conversed on indifferent subjects, and spoke of having had "a cold bath" last night, which had done him much good! My heart grew heavier and heavier as we neared the home where I was to bring her idiot father to Miss Dudleigh! I felt sick with agitation as we descended the carriage steps.

But I was for some time happily disappointed. He entered her room with eagerness, ran up to her and kissed her with his usual affectionate energy. She held him in her arms for some time, exclaiming,—"Oh father, father! How glad I am to see you!—I thought some accident had happened to you! Why did you not tell me that you were going home with Dr. —?" My wife and I trembled, and looked at each other despairingly.

"Why," replied her father, sitting down beside her, "you see, my love, Dr. — recommended me a cold bath."

"A *cold bath* at *this* time of the year!" exclaimed Miss Dudleigh, looking at me with astonishment. I smiled with ill-assumed nonchalance.

"It is very advantageous at—at—even this season of the year," I stammered, for I observed Miss Dudleigh's eye fixed on me like a ray of lightning.

"Yes—but they ought to have *taken off my clothes first*," said Mr. Dudleigh, with a shuddering motion. His daughter suddenly laid her hand on him, uttered a faint shriek, and fell back in her bed in a swoon. The dreadful scene of the morning was all acted over again. I think I should have rejoiced to see

her expire on the spot; but, no! Providence had allotted her a further space, that she might drain the cup of sorrow to the dregs!

\* \* \* \* \*

*Tuesday, 18th July, 18—.*—I am still in attendance on poor unfortunate Miss Dudleigh. The scenes I have to encounter are often anguishing, and even heart-breaking. She lingers on day after day and week after week in increasing pain!—by the bedside of the dying girl sits the figure of an elderly gray-haired man, dressed in neat and simple mourning—now gazing into vacancy with “lack-lustre eye”—and then suddenly kissing her hand with childish eagerness, and chattering mere gibberish to her! It is her idiot father! Yes, he proves an irrecoverable idiot—but is uniformly quiet and inoffensive. We at first intended to have sent him to a neighbouring private institution for the reception of the insane; but poor Miss Dudleigh would not hear of it, and threatened to destroy herself if her father was removed. She insisted on his being allowed to continue with her, and consented that a proper person should be in constant attendance on him. She herself could manage him, she said! and so it proved. He is a mere child in her hands. If ever he is inclined to be mischievous or obstreperous—which is very seldom—if she do but say “hush!” or lift up her trembling finger, or fix her eye upon him reprov-ingly, he is instantly cowed, and runs up to her to “kiss and be friends.” He often falls down on his knees, when he thinks he has offended her, and cries like a child. She will not trust him out of her sight for more than a few moments together—except when he retires with his guardian to rest;—and indeed he shows as little inclination to leave her. The nurse’s situation is almost a sort of sinecure; for the anxious officiousness of Mr. Dudleigh leaves her little to do. He alone gives his daughter her medicine and food, and does so with requisite gentle-

ness and tenderness. He has no notion of her real state—that she is dying; and finding that she could not succeed in her efforts gradually to apprise him of the event, which he always turned off with a smile of incredulity, she gives in to his humour, and tells him—poor girl!—that she is getting better! He has taken it into his head that she is to be married to Lord —— as soon as she recovers, and talks with high glee of the magnificent repairs going on at his former house in —— Square! He always accompanies me to the door; and sometimes writes me checks for 50*l.*—which of course is a delusion only; as he has no banker, and few funds to put in his hands; and at other times slips a shilling or a sixpence into my hand at leaving—thinking, doubtless, that he has given me a guinea.

*Friday.*—The idea of Miss Dudleigh's rapidly approaching marriage continues still uppermost in her father's head; and he is incessantly pestering her to make preparations for the event. To-day he appealed to me, and complained that she would not order her wedding-dress.

"Father, dear father!" said Miss Dudleigh, faintly, laying her wasted hand on his arm,—“only be quiet a little, and I'll begin to make it!—I'll really set about it to-morrow!” He kissed her fondly, and then eagerly emptied his pockets of all the loose silver that was in them, telling her to take it, and order the materials. I saw that there was something or other peculiar in the expression of Miss Dudleigh's eye, in saying what she did—as if some sudden scheme had suggested itself to her. Indeed, the looks with which she constantly regards him are such as I can find no adequate terms of description for. They bespeak blended anguish—apprehension—pity—love—in short, an expression that haunts me wherever I go. Oh what a scene of suffering humanity—a daughter's death-bed watched by an idiot father!

*Monday.*—I now know what was Miss Dudleigh's meaning in assenting to her father's proposal last Friday. I found, this morning, the poor dear girl engaged on her shroud!—It is of fine muslin, and she is attempting to sew and embroider it. The people about her did all they could to dissuade her; but there was at last no resisting her importunities. Yes—there she sits, poor thing, propped up by pillows, making frequent but feeble efforts to draw her needle through her gloomy work,—her father, the while, holding one end of the muslin, and watching her work with childish eagerness. Sometimes a tear will fall from her eyes while thus engaged. It did this morning. Mr. Dudleigh observed it, and, turning to me, said, with an arch smile, "Ah, ha!—how is it that young ladies always cry about being married?" Oh the look Miss Dudleigh gave me, as she suddenly dropped her work, and turned her head aside!

*Saturday.*—Mr. Dudleigh is hard at work making his daughter a cowslip wreath, out of some flowers given him by his keeper!

When I took my leave to-day, he accompanied me, as usual, down stairs, and led the way into the little parlour. He then shut the door, and told me, in a low whisper, that he wished me to bring him "an *honest* lawyer,"—to make his will; for that he was going to settle 200,000*l.* upon his daughter!—of course I put him off with promises to look out for what he asked. It is rather remarkable, I think, that he has never once, in my hearing, made any allusion to his deceased wife. As I shook his hand at parting, he stared suddenly at me, and said, "Doctor, doctor! my daughter is very slow in getting well—isn't she?"

*Monday, July 24.*—The suffering angel will soon leave us and all her sorrows!—She is dying fast: She is very much altered in appearance, and has not power enough to speak in more than a whisper—



and that but seldom. Her father sits gazing at her with a puzzled air, as if he did not know what to make of her unusual silence. He was a good deal vexed when she laid aside her "wedding-dress,"—and tried to tempt her to resume it, by showing her a shilling!—While I was sitting beside her, Miss Dudleigh, without opening her eyes, exclaimed, scarcely audible, "Oh! be kind to him! be kind to him! He won't be long here! He is very gentle!"

—— *Evening.* Happening to be summoned to the neighbourhood, I called a second time during the day on Miss Dudleigh. All was quiet when I entered the room. The nurse was sitting at the window, reading; and Mr. Dudleigh occupied his usual place at the bedside, leaning over his daughter, whose arms were clasped together round his neck.

"Hush! hush!" said Mr. Dudleigh, in a low whisper, as I approached; "don't make a noise—she's asleep!" Yes, she was ASLEEP—and to wake no more!—Her snow-cold arms, her features, which on parting the dishevelled hair that hid them, I perceived to be fallen—told me that she was dead!

She was buried in the same grave as her mother. Her wretched father, contrary to our apprehensions, made no disturbance whatever while she lay dead. They told him that she was no more—but he did not seem to comprehend what was meant. He would take hold of her passive hand, gently shake it, and let it fall again, with a melancholy wandering stare that was pitiable!—He sat at her coffin-side all day long, and laid fresh flowers upon her every morning. Dreading lest some sudden paroxysm might occur, if he was suffered to see the lid screwed down, and her remains removed, we gave him a tolerably strong opiate in some wine, on the morning of the funeral; and as soon as he was fast asleep, we proceeded with the last sad rites, and committed to the cold and quiet grave another broken heart!

Mr. Dudleigh suffered himself to be soon after conveyed to a private asylum, where he had every comfort and attention requisite to his circumstances. He had fallen into profound melancholy, and seldom or never spoke to any one. He would shake me by the hand languidly when I called to see him,—but hung down his head in silence, without answering any of my questions.

His favourite seat was a rustic bench beneath an ample sycamore-tree, in the green behind the house. Here he would sit for hours together, gazing fixedly in one direction, towards a rustic church-steeple, and uttering deep sighs. No one interfered with him; and he took no notice of any one.—One afternoon a gentleman of foreign appearance called at the asylum, and in a hurried, faltering voice, asked if he could see Mr. Dudleigh. A servant but newly engaged on the establishment imprudently answered, "Certainly, sir. Yonder he is, sitting under the sycamore. He never notices any one, sir." The stranger—young Dudleigh, who had but that morning arrived from America—rushed past the servant into the garden; and flinging down his hat, fell on one knee before his father, clasping his hands over his breast. Finding his father did not seem inclined to notice him, he gently touched him on the knee, and whispered, "FATHER!" Mr. Dudleigh started at the sound, turned suddenly towards his son, looked him full in the face—fell back in his seat, and instantly expired!

## CHAPTER IV.

## MOTHER AND SON.

THIS is the last, and, it may be considered, most mournful extract from my diary. It appears to me a touching and terrible disclosure of the misery, disgrace, and ruin consequent on GAMBLING. Not that I imagine it possible, even by the most moving exhibition, to soften the more than nether-millstone hardness of a gamester's heart, or enable a *voluntary* victim to break from the meshes in which he has suffered himself to be entangled;—but the lamentable cries ascending from this pit of horror, may scare off those who are thoughtlessly *approaching* its brink. The moral of the following events may be gathered up into a word or two:—Oh! be wise, *and be wise in time!*

I took more than ordinary pains to acquaint myself with the transactions which are hereafter specified; and some of the means I adopted are occasionally mentioned, as I go on with the narrative. It may be as well to state, that the events detailed are assigned a date which barely counts within the present century. I have reason, nevertheless, to know, that at least one of the guilty agents still survives to pollute the earth with his presence; and if that individual should presume to gainsay any portion of the following narrative, his impotent efforts will meet with the disdain they merit.

Mr. Beauchamp came to the full receipt of a fortune of two or three thousand a-year, which, though hereditary, was at his absolute disposal, about the period of his return from those continental peregrina-

nations which are judged essential to complete an English gentleman's education. External circumstances seemed to combine in his favour. Happiness and honour in life were ensured him, at the cost of very moderate exertions on his own part, and *those* requisite, not to originate or continue his course, but only to *guide* it. No one was better apprized than himself of the precise position he occupied in life; yet the apparent immunity from the cares and anxieties of life which seemed irrevocably secured to him, instead of producing its natural effect on a well-ordered mind of stimulating it to honourable action, led to widely different, most melancholy, but by no means unusual, results—a prostitution of his energies and opportunities to the service of fashionable dissipation. The restraints to which, during a long minority, he had been subjected by his admirable mother, who nursed his fortune as sedulously, but *more* successfully, than she cultivated his mind and morals—served, alas! little other purpose than to whet his appetite for the pleasurable pursuits to which he considered himself entitled, and from which he had been so long and unnecessarily debarred. All these forbidden fruits clustered before him in tempting, but unhallowed splendour, the instant that Oxford threw open its portals to receive him. He found there many spirits as ardent and dissatisfied with past restraints as himself. The principal features of his character were flexibility and credulity; and his leading propensity—one that, like the wrath of Achilles, drew after it innumerable sorrows—the love of *play*.

The first false step he made was an unfortunate selection of a tutor; a man of agreeable and compliant manners, but utterly worthless in point of moral character; one who had impoverished himself when first at college by gaming, but who, having learned "*wisdom*," was now a subtle and cautious gamester. He was one of a set of notorious

*pluckers*, among whom, shameful to relate, were found several young men of rank, and whose business it was to seek out freshmen for their dupes. Eccles, the name I shall give the tutor, was an able mathematician; and that was the only thing that Beauchamp looked to in selecting him. Beauchamp got, regularly introduced to the set to which his tutor belonged; but his mother's lively and incessant surveillance put it out of his power to embarrass himself by serious losses. He was long enough, however, apprenticed to guilt to form the habits and disposition of a *gamester*. The cunning Eccles, when anxiously interrogated by Mrs. Beauchamp about her son's general conduct, gave his pupil a flourishing character, both for moral excellence and literary attainments, and acquitted him of any tendency to the vices usually prevalent at college. And all this when Eccles knew that he had seen, but a few weeks before, among his pupil's papers, copies of long bills, accepted payable on his reaching twenty-one, to the tune of 1500*l.*; and, further, that he, the tutor himself, was the holder of one of these acceptances, which ensured him 500*l.* for the 300*l.* he had *kindly* furnished for his pupil! His demure and plausible air quite took with the unsuspecting Mrs. Beauchamp; and she thought it impossible that her son could find a fitter companion to the Continent.

On young Beauchamp's return to England, the first thing he did was to despatch his obsequious tutor into the country, to trumpet his pupil's praises to his mother, and apprise her of his coming. The good old lady was in ecstasies at the glowing colours in which her son's virtues were painted by Eccles;—such uniform moderation and prudence, amid the seductive scenes of the Continent; such shining candour; such noble liberality! In the fulness of her heart, Mrs. Beauchamp promised the tutor, who was educated for the *church*, the next presentation to a living which was expected very shortly to fall

vacant; as some "small return for the *invaluable* services he had rendered her son!"

It was a memorable day when young Beauchamp, arrived at the Hall in —shire, stood suddenly before his transported mother in all the pride of person, and of apparent accomplishments. He was indeed a fine young fellow to look at. His well-cast features beamed with an expression of frankness and generosity; and his manners were exquisitely tempered with cordiality and elegance. He had *brushed the bloom* off continental flowers in passing, and caught their glow and perfume.

It was several minutes before he could disengage himself from the embraces of his mother, who laughed and wept by turns, and uttered the most passionate exclamations of joy and affection. "Oh, that your poor old father could see you!" she sobbed, and almost cried herself into hysterics. Young Beauchamp was deeply moved with this display of parental tenderness. He saw and felt that his mother's whole soul was bound up with his own; and, with the rapid resolutions of youth, he had in five minutes changed the whole course and scope of his life—renounced the pleasures of London, and resolved to come and settle on his estates in the country, live under the proud and fond eye of his mother, and, in a word, tread in the steps of his father. He felt suddenly imbued with the spirit of the good old English country gentleman, and resolved to live the life of one. There was, however, a cause in operation, and powerful operation, to bring about this change of feeling, to which I have not yet adverted. His cousin, Ellen Beauchamp, *happened* to be thought of by her aunt, as a fit person to be staying with her when her son arrived. Yes, the little blue-eyed girl with whom he had romped fifteen years ago, now sat beside him in the bloom of budding womanhood—her peachy cheeks alternately pale and flushed as she saw her cousin's inquiring

eye settled upon her, and scanning her beautiful proportions. Mr. Beauchamp took the very first opportunity he could seize of asking his mother, with some trepidation, "whether Ellen was *engaged*!"

"I think she is *not*," replied his delighted mother, bursting into tears, and folding him in her arms—"but I wish *somebody* would take the earliest opportunity of doing so."

"Ah, ha!—Then she's Mrs. Beauchamp, junior!" replied her son, with enthusiasm.

Matters were quickly, quietly, and effectually arranged to bring about that desirable end—as they always are when all parties understand one another; and young Beauchamp made up his mind to appear in a new character—that of a quiet country gentleman, the friend and patron of an attached tenantry, and a promising aspirant after county honours. What is there in life like the sweet and freshening feelings of the wealthy young squire, stepping into the sphere of his hereditary honours and influences, and becoming at once the revered master of household and tenantry, grown gray in his father's service,—the prop of his family, and the "rising man" in the county! Young Beauchamp experienced these salutary and reviving feelings in their full force. They diverted the current of his ambition into a new course, and enabled him keenly to appreciate his own capabilities. The difference between the life he had just determined on, and that he had formerly projected, was simply, so to speak, the difference between being a triton among minnows, and a minnow among tritons. There, residing on his own property, surrounded by his own dependents, and by neighbours who were solicitous to secure his good graces, he could *feel* and enjoy his own consequence. Thus, in every point of view, a country life appeared preferable to one in the "gay and whirlpool-crowded town."

There was, however, one individual at —— Hall,

who viewed these altered feelings and projects with no satisfaction; it was Mr. Eccles. This mean and selfish individual saw at once that, in the event of these alterations being carried into effect, his own nefarious services would be instantly dispensed with, and a state of feelings brought into play, which would lead his pupil to look with disgust at the scenes to which he had been introduced at college and on the Continent. He immediately set to work to frustrate the plans of his pupil. He selected the occasion of his being sent for one morning by Mr. Beauchamp into his library, to commence operations. He was not discouraged when his *ci-devant* pupil, whose eyes had really, as Eccles suspected, been opened to the iniquity of his tutor's doings, commenced thanking him in a cold and formal style for his past services, and requested presentation of the bill he held against him for 500*l.*, which he instantly paid. He then proceeded, without interruption from the mortified Eccles, to state his regret at being unable to reward his services with a living, at present; but that, if ever it were in his power, he might rely on it, &c. &c. Mr. Eccles, with astonishment, mentioned the living of which Mrs. Beauchamp had promised him the reversion; but received an evasive reply from Mr. Beauchamp, who was at length so much irritated at the pertinacity, and even the reproachful tone with which his tutor pressed his claim, that he said sharply, "Mr. Eccles, when my mother made you that promise, she never consulted me, in whose sole gift the living is. And besides, sir, what did she know of our tricks at French hazard, and Rouge et Noir? She must have thought your skill at play an odd recommendation for the duties of the church." High words, mutual recriminations and threats, ensued, and they parted in anger. The tutor resolved to make his "ungrateful" pupil repent of his misconduct, and he lacked neither the tact nor the opportunities necessary for



accomplishing his purpose. The altered demeanour of Mrs. Beauchamp, together with the haughty and constrained civility of her son, soon warned Mr. Eccles that his departure from the Hall could not be delayed; and he very shortly withdrew.

Mr. Beauchamp began to breathe freely, as it were, when the evil spirit, in his tutor's shape, was no longer at his elbow, poisoning his principles, and prompting him to vice and debauchery. He resolved, forthwith, to be all that his tutor had *represented* him to his mother; to atone for past indiscretions by a life of sobriety and virtue. All now went on smoothly and happily at the Hall. The new squire entered actively on the duties devolving upon him, and was engaged daily driving his beautiful cousin over his estate; and showing to his obsequious tenantry their future lady. On what trifling accidents do often the great changes of life depend!—Mr. Beauchamp, after a three months' continuance in the country, was sent for by his solicitor to town, in order to complete the final arrangements of his estate; and which, he supposed, would occupy him but a few days. That London visit led to his ruin! It may be recollected that the execrable Eccles owed his pupil a grudge for the disappointment he had occasioned him, and the time and manner of his dismissal. What does the reader imagine was the diabolical device he adopted, to bring about the utter ruin of his unsuspecting pupil? Apprized of Mr. Beauchamp's visit to London,—(Mr. Eccles had removed to lodgings but a little distance from the Hall, and was of course acquainted with the leading movements of the family)—he wrote the following letter to a baronet in London, with whom he had been very intimate as a “plucker” at Oxford, and who having ruined himself by his devotion to play—equally in respect of fortune and character—was now become little else than a downright systematic sharper.

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"DEAR SIR EDWARD,

"Young Beauchamp, one of our quondam *pigeons* at Oxford, who has just come of age, will be in London next Friday or Saturday, and put up at his old hotel, the ——. *He will bear plucking.* Verb. suf. The bird is somewhat shy—but you are a good shot. Don't frighten him. He is giving up *life*, and going to turn *saint*! The fellow has used me cursedly ill; he has cut me quite, and refused me old Dr. —'s living. I'll make him repent it! I will by —!

"Yours ever, most faithfully,

"PETER ECCLES."

"TO SIR EDWARD STREIGHTON.

"P.S. If Beauchamp plucks well, you won't press me for the trifle I owe—will you? Burn this note."

This infernal letter, which, by a singular concurrence of events, got into the hands where *I saw it*, laid the train for such a series of plotting and manœuvring, as, in the end, ruined poor Beauchamp, and gave Eccles his coveted revenge.

When Beauchamp quitted the Hall, his mother and Ellen had the most solemn assurance that his stay in town would not be protracted beyond the week. Nothing but this could quiet the good old lady's apprehensions, who expressed an unaccountable conviction that some calamity or other was about to assail their house. She had had a dreadful dream, she said; but when importuned to tell it, answered, that if Henry came safe home, then she would tell them her dream. In short, his departure was a scene of tears and gloom, which left an impression of sadness on his own mind, that lasted all the way up to town. On his arrival, he betook himself to his old place, the —— hotel, near Piccadilly; and, in order to expedite his business as much as possible, appointed the evening of the very day of his arrival for a meeting with his solicitor.

The morning papers duly apprized the world of the

important fact, that "Henry Beauchamp, Esquire, had arrived at ——'s, from his seat in ——shire;" and scarce ten minutes after he had read the officious annunciation at breakfast his valet brought him the card of Sir Edward Streighton.

"Sir Edward Streighton!" exclaimed Beauchamp, with astonishment, laying down the card; adding, after a pause, with a cold and doubtful air, "Show in Sir Edward, of course."

In a few moments the baronet was ushered into the room—made up to his old "friend" with great cordiality, and expressed a thousand winning civilities. He was attired in a style of fashionable negligence; and his pale emaciated features ensured him, at least, the *show* of a welcome, with which he would not otherwise have been greeted; for Beauchamp, though totally ignorant of the present pursuits and degraded character of his visiter, had seen enough of him in the heyday of dissipation to avoid a renewal of their intimacy. Beauchamp was touched with the air of languor and exhaustion assumed by Sir Edward, and asked kindly after his health.

The wily baronet contrived to keep him occupied with that topic for nearly an hour, till he fancied he had established an interest for himself in his destined victim's heart. He told him, with a languid smile, that the moment he saw Beauchamp's arrival in the papers he had hurried, ill as he was, to pay a visit to his "old chum," and "talk over old times." In short, after laying out all his powers of conversation, he so interested and delighted his quondam associate, that he extorted a reluctant promise from Beauchamp to dine with him the next evening, on the plausible pretext of his being in too delicate health to venture out himself at night-time. Sir Edward departed, apparently in a low mood, but really exulting in the success with which he considered he had opened his infernal campaign. He hurried to the house of one of his comrades in guilt, whom he

invited to dinner on the morrow. Now, the fiendish object of this man, Sir Edward Streighton, in asking Beauchamp to dinner, was to revive in his bosom the half-extinguished embers of his love for play! There are documents now in existence to show that Sir Edward and his companions had made the most exact calculations of poor Beauchamp's property, and even arranged the proportions in which the expected spoils were to be shared among the complotters! The whole conduct of the affair was entrusted, at his own instance, to Sir Edward; who, with a smile, declared that he "knew all the crooks and crannies of young Beauchamp's heart;" and that he had already settled his scheme of operations. He was himself to keep for some time in the background, and on no occasion to come forward till he was sure of his prey.

At the appointed hour, Beauchamp, though not without having experienced some misgivings in the course of the day, found himself seated at the elegant and luxurious table of Sir Edward, in company with two of the baronet's "choicest spirits." It would be superfluous to pause over the exquisite wines and luscious cookery which were placed in requisition for the occasion, or the various piquant and brilliant conversation that flashed around the table. Sir Edward was a man of talent and observation; and foul as were the scenes in which he had latterly passed his life, was full of rapid and brilliant repartee, and piquant sketches of men and manners, without end. Like the poor animal whose palate is for a moment tickled with the bait alluring it to destruction, Beauchamp was in ecstasies! There was, besides, such a flattering deference paid to every thing that fell from his lips—so much eager curiosity excited by the accounts he gave of one or two of his foreign adventures—such an interest taken in the arrangements he contemplated for augmenting his estates in ——shire, &c. &c. that Beauchamp never

felt better pleased with himself, nor with his companions. About eleven o'clock, one of Sir Edward's friends proposed a rubber at whist, "thinking they had all of them talked one another hoarse;" but Sir Edward promptly negatived it. The proposer insisted, but Sir Edward coldly repeated his refusal. "I am not tired of my friends' conversation, though they may be of mine! And I fancy, Beauchamp," he continued, shaking his head with a serious air, "you and I have burnt our fingers too often at college to be desirous of renewing our pranks."

"Why, good God, Sir Edward!" rejoined the proposer, "what do you mean? Are you insinuating that I am fond of *deep play*?—I, I that have been such a sufferer!" How was it that such shallow trickery could not be seen through by a man who knew any thing of the world? The answer is obvious—the victim's penetration had deserted him: flattery and wine—what will they not lead a man to? In short, the farce was so well kept up that Beauchamp, fancying he alone stood in the way of the evening's amusements, felt himself called upon to "beg they would not consult *him*, if they were disposed for a rubber; as he would make a hand with the greatest pleasure imaginable." The proposer and his friend looked appealingly to Sir Edward.

"Oh! God forbid that I should hinder you, since you're all so disposed," said the baronet, with a polite air; and in a few minutes the four *friends* were seated at the whist-table. *Sir Edward was obliged to send out and buy, or borrow cards!* "He really so seldom," &c. &c. "especially in his poor health," &c. &c.! There was nothing whatever in the conduct of the game calculated to arouse a spark of suspicion. The three confederates acted their parts to admiration, and maintained throughout the matter-of-fact, listless air of men who have sat down to cards, each out of complaisance to the others! At the end of the second rubber, which was

a long one, they paused a while, rose, and betook themselves to refreshments.

"By-the-way, Apsley," said Sir Edward, suddenly, "have you heard how that extraordinary affair of General ——'s, terminated?"

"Decided against him," was the reply; "but I think wrongly. At ——'s," naming a celebrated coterie, "where the affair was ultimately canvassed, they were equally divided in opinion; and on the strength of it the general swears he won't pay."

"It is certainly one of the most singular things!"

"Pray, what might the disputed point be?" inquired Beauchamp, sipping a glass of liqueur.

"Oh, merely a bit of town tittle-tattle," replied Sir Edward, carelessly, "about a Rouge et Noir bet between Lord —— and General ——. I dare say, you would feel no interest in it whatever."

But Beauchamp *did* feel interested enough to press his host for an account of the matter: and he presently found himself listening to a story told most graphically by Sir Edward, and artfully calculated to interest and inflame the passions of his hearer. Beauchamp drank in eagerly every word. He could not help identifying himself with the parties spoken of. A satanic smile flickered occasionally over the countenances of the conspirators, as they beheld these unequivocal indications that their prey was entering their toils. Sir Edward represented the hinge of the story to be a moot-point at Rouge et Noir; and when he had concluded, an animated discussion arose. Beauchamp took an active part in the dispute, siding with Mr. Apsley. Sir Edward got *flushed*! and began to express himself rather heatedly. Beauchamp also felt himself kindling, and involuntarily cooled his ardour with glass after glass of the wine that stood before him. At length, out leaped a bold bet from Beauchamp, that he would make the same point with General ——. Sir Edward shrugged his shoulders, and with a smile declined

"winning his money" on a point clear as the noon-day sun! Mr. Hillier, however, who was of Sir Edward's opinion, instantly took Beauchamp; and, for the symmetry of the thing, Apsley and Sir Edward, in spite of the latter's protestation to Beauchamp, betted highly on their respective opinions. Somebody suggested an adjournment to the "establishment" at — street, where they might decide the question; and thither, accordingly, after great show of reluctance on the part of Sir Edward, they all four repaired.

The reader need not fear that I am going to dilate upon the sickening horrors of a modern "hell!" for into such a place did Beauchamp find himself introduced. The infernal splendour of the scene by which he was surrounded smote his soul with a sense of guilty awe the moment he entered, flushed though he was, and unsteady with wine. A spectral recollection of his mother and Ellen, wreathed with the haloes of virtue and purity, glanced across his mind; and for a moment he thought himself in hell! Sick and faint, he sat down for a few moments at an unoccupied table. He felt half-determined to rush out from the room. His kind friends perceived his agitation. Sir Edward asked him if he were ill! but Beauchamp, with a sickly smile, referred his sensations to the heated room, and the unusual quantity of wine he had drunk. Half ashamed of himself, and dreading their banter, he presently rose from his seat, and declared himself recovered. After standing some time beside the Rouge et Noir table, where tremendous stakes were playing for, amid profound and agitating silence,—where he marked the sallow features of General — and Lord —, the parties implicated in the affair mentioned at Sir Edward's table, and who, having arranged their dispute, were now over head and ears in a *new* transaction,—the four friends withdrew to one of the private tables to talk over their bet. Alas, half-an-hour's time beheld

them all at *hazard*!—Beauchamp playing! and with excitement and enthusiasm equalling any one's in the room. Sir Edward maintained the negligent and reluctant air of a man overpersuaded into acquiescence in the wishes of his companions. Every time that Beauchamp shook the fatal dice-box, the pale face of his mother looked at him; yet still he shook, and still he threw—for he won freely from Apsley and Hillier. About four o'clock he took his departure, with bank-notes in his pocketbook to the amount of 95*l.* as his evening's winning.

He walked home to his hotel weary and depressed in spirits, ashamed and enraged at his own weak compliances and irresolution. The thought suddenly struck him, however, that he would make amends for his misconduct, by appropriating the whole of his unhallowed gains to the purchase of jewelry for his mother and cousin. Relieved by this consideration, he threw himself on his bed, and slept, though uneasily, till a late hour in the morning. His first thought on waking was the last that had occupied his mind overnight; but it was in a moment met by another and more startling reflection—What would Sir Edward, Hillier, and Apsley think of him, dragging them to play, and winning their money, without giving them an opportunity of retrieving their losses! The more he thought of it the more was he embarrassed; and as he tossed about on his bed, the suspicion flashed across his disturbed mind, that he was embroiled with gamblers. With what credit could he skulk from the attack he had himself provoked? Perplexed and agitated with the dilemma he had drawn upon himself, he came to the conclusion, that, at all events, he must invite the baronet and his friends to dinner that day, and give them their revenge, when he might retreat with honour, and for ever. Every one who reads these pages will anticipate the event.

Gaming is a magical stream; if you do but wade



far enough into it, to wet the soles of your feet, there is an influence in the waters which draws you irresistibly in, deeper and deeper, till you are sucked into the roaring vortex, and perish. If it were not unduly paradoxical, one might say with respect to gaming, that he has come to the end, who has made a beginning. Mr. Beauchamp postponed the business which he had himself fixed for transacting that evening, and received Sir Edward—who had found out that he could *now* venture from home at nights—and his two friends, with all appearance of cheerfulness and cordiality. In his heart he felt ill at ease; but his uneasiness vanished with every glass of wine he drunk. His guests were all men of conversation; and they took care to select the most interesting topics. Beauchamp was delighted. Some slight laughing allusions were made by Hillier and Apsley to their overnight's adventure; but Sir Edward coldly characterized it as an "absurd affair," and told them they deserved to suffer as they did. This was exactly the signal for which Beauchamp had long been waiting; and he proposed in a moment that cards and dice should be brought in to finish the evening with. Hillier and Apsley hesitated; Sir Edward looked at his watch, and talked of the opera. Beauchamp, however, was peremptory, and down they all sat—and to *hazard*! Beauchamp was fixedly determined to lose that evening a hundred pounds, inclusive of his overnight's winnings; and veiled his purpose so flimsily, that his opponents saw in a moment "what he was after." Mr. Apsley laid down the dice-box with a haughty air, and said, "Mr. Beauchamp, I do not understand you, sir. You are playing neither with boys nor swindlers; and be pleased, besides, to recollect at whose instance we sat down to this evening's hazard."

Mr. Beauchamp laughed it off, and protested he did his best. Apsley, apparently satisfied, resumed his play, and their victim *felt* himself in their meshes—

that the "snare of the fowler was upon him." They played with various success for about two hours; and Sir Edward was listlessly intimating his intention to have a throw for the first time, "for company's sake," when the card of a young nobleman, one of the most profligate of the profligate set whom Beauchamp had known at Oxford, was brought in.

"Ah! Lord——!" exclaimed Sir Edward, with joyful surprise, "an age since I saw him!—How very strange—how fortunate that I should happen to be here!—Oh, come, Beauchamp,"—seeing his host disposed to utter a frigid "not at home,"—"come, *must* ask him in! The very best fellow in life!" Now, Lord—— and Sir Edward were bosom friends, equally unprincipled, and that very morning had they arranged this most *unexpected* visit of his lordship! As soon as the ably-sustained excitement and enthusiasm of his lordship had subsided, he of course assured them that he should leave immediately, unless they proceeded with their play, and he stationed himself as an on-looker beside Beauchamp.

The infernal crew now began to see they had it "all their own way." Their tactics might have been finally frustrated had Beauchamp but possessed sufficient moral courage to yield to the loud promptings of his better judgment, and firmly determined to stop in time. Alas! however, he had taken into his bosom the torpid snake, and kept it there till it revived. In the warmth of excitement he forgot his fears, and his decaying propensities to play were rapidly resuscitated. Before the evening's close, he had entered into the spirit of the game with as keen a relish as a professed gamester! With a sort of phrensy he proposed bets, which the *cautious* baronet and his coadjutors hesitated, and at last refused, to take! About three o'clock they separated, and on making up accounts, they found that so equally had profit and loss been shared, that no one had lost or gained more than 20*l*. Beauchamp accepted a seat

in Lord ——'s box at the opera for the next evening ; and the one following that he engaged to dine with Apsley. After his guests had retired, he betook himself to bed, with comparatively none of those heart-smittings which had kept him sleepless the night before. The men with whom he had been playing were evidently no professional gamblers, and he felt himself safe in their hands.

To the opera, pursuant to promise, he went, and to Apsley's. At the former he recognised several of his college acquaintance ; and at the latter's house he spent a delightful evening, never having said better things, and never being more flatteringly attended to ; and the night's social enjoyment was wound up with a friendly rubber for stakes laughably small. This was Sir Edward's scheme, for he was not, it will be recollected, to "*frighten* the bird." The doomed Beauchamp retired to rest, better satisfied with himself and his friends than ever ; for he had transacted a little real business during the day ; written two letters to the country, and despatched them with a pair of magnificent bracelets to Ellen ; played the whole evening at unpretending whist, and won two guineas, instead of accompanying Lord —— and Hillier to the establishment in —— street, where he *might* have lost hundreds. A worthy old English bishop says, "The devil then maketh sure of us, when we do make sure of ourselves,"—a wise maxim ! Poor Beauchamp now began to feel confidence in his own strength of purpose. He thought he had been weighed in the balance, and *not* found wanting. He was as deeply convinced as ever of the pernicious effects of an inordinate love of play ; but had he that passion ? No ! He recollected the healthful thrill of horror and disgust with which he listened to Lord ——'s entreaties to accompany him to the gaming-house, and was satisfied. He took an early opportunity of writing home, to apprise his mother and cousin that he intended to continue in

town a month or six weeks, and assigned satisfactory reasons for his protracted stay. He wrote in the warmest terms to both of them, and said he should be counting the days till he threw himself in their arms. "'Tis this tiresome Twister, our attorney, that must answer for my long stay. There is no quickening his phlegmatic disposition! When I would hurry and press him, he shrugs his shoulders, and says there's no doing law by *steam*. He says he fears the chancery affairs will prove very tedious; and they are in such a state just now, that, were I to return into the country, I should be summoned up to town again in a twinkling. Now I *am* here, I will get all this business fairly off my hands. So, by this day six weeks, dearest coz, expect to see at your feet, yours, eternally,—H. B."

But, alas, that day saw Beauchamp in a new and startling character—that of an infatuated gamester! During that fatal six weeks he had lost several thousand pounds, and had utterly neglected the business which brought him up to town,—for his whole heart was with French hazard and Rouge et Noir! Even his outward appearance had undergone a strange alteration. His cheeks and forehead wore the sallow hue of dissipation—his eyes were weak and bloodshot—his hands trembled—and every movement indicated the highest degree of nervous irritability. He had become vexed and out of temper with all about him, but especially with himself, and never could "bring himself up to par" till seven or eight o'clock in the evening, at dinner, when he was warming with wine. The first thing in the morning, also, he felt it necessary to fortify himself against the agitation of the day by a smart draught of brandy or liqueur! If the mere love of temporary excitement had been sufficient, in the first instance, to allure him on to play, the desire for retrieving his losses now supplied a stronger motive for persevering in his dangerous and destructive career. *Ten thou-*

*sand pounds*, the lowest amount of his losses, was a sum he could not afford to lose without very serious inconvenience. Gracious God!—what would his aged mother, what would Ellen say, if they knew the mode and amount of his losses? The thought distracted him! He had drawn out of his banker's hands all the floating balance he had placed there on arriving in town; and, in short, he had been at last compelled to mortgage one of his favourite estates for 8000*l.*;—and how to conceal the transaction from his mother, without making desperate and successful efforts to recover himself at play, he did not know. He had now got inextricably involved with Sir Edward and his set, who never allowed him a moment's time to come to himself, but were ever ready with diversified sources of amusement. Under their damned tutelage, Beauchamp commenced the systematic life of a "man about town," in all except the fouler and grosser vices, to which, I believe, he was never addicted.

His money flew about in all directions. He never went to the establishment in — street but his overnight's I.O.U.'s stared him in the face the next morning like reproachful fiends!—and he was daily accumulating bills at the fashionable tradesmen's, whom he gave higher prices to ensure longer credit. While he was compelled to write down confidentially to old Pritchard, his agent, for money, almost every third or fourth post, his correspondence with his mother and cousin gradually slackened, and his letters, short as they were, indicated effort and constraint on the part of the writer. It was long, very long before Mrs. Beauchamp suspected that any thing was going wrong. She was completely cajoled by her son's accounts of the complicated and harassing affairs of chancery, and considered that circumstance fully to account for the brevity and infrequency of his letters. The quicker eyes of Ellen, however, soon saw, in the chilling shortness and formality of

his letters to her, that even if his regard for her personally were not diminishing, he had discovered such pleasurable objects in town as enabled him to bear, with great fortitude, the *pangs of absence*!

Gaming exerts a deadening influence upon all the faculties of the soul that are not immediately occupied in its dreadful service. The *heart* it utterly withers: and it was not long, therefore, before Beauchamp was fully aware of the altered state of his feelings towards his cousin, and *satisfied* with them. Play—play—PLAY, was the name of his new and tyrannical mistress! Need I utter such common-places as to say, that the more Beauchamp played the more he lost; that the more he lost the deeper he played; and that the less chance there was, the more reckless he became?—I cannot dwell on this dreary portion of my narrative. It is sufficient to inform the reader, that, employed in the way I have mentioned, Beauchamp protracted his stay in London to *five months*. During this time he had actually gambled away *THREE-FOURTHS* of his whole fortune. He was now both ashamed and afraid of returning home. Letters from his poor mother and Ellen accumulated upon him and often lay for weeks unanswered. Mrs. Beauchamp had once remonstrated with him on his allowing *any* of his affairs to keep him so long in town, under the peculiar circumstances in which he was placed with respect to Ellen: but she received such a tart reply from her son as effectually prevented her future interference. She began to grow very uneasy, and to suspect that something or other unfortunate had happened to her son. Her fears hurried her into a disregard of her son's menaces; and at length she wrote up privately to Mr. Twister to know what was the state of affairs, and what kept Mr. Beauchamp so harassingly employed. The poor old lady received for answer—that the attorney knew of nothing that need have detained

Mr. Beauchamp in town beyond a week; and that he had not been to Mr. Twister's office for several *months!*

Pritchard, Mr. Beauchamp's agent, was a quiet and faithful fellow, and managed all his master's concerns with the utmost punctuality and secrecy. He had been elevated from the rank of a common servant in the family to his present office, which he had filled for thirty years with unspotted credit. He had been a great favourite with old Mr. Beauchamp, who committed him to the kindness of Mrs. Beauchamp, and requested her to continue him in his office till his son arrived at his majority. The good old man was therefore thoroughly identified with the family interests; and it was natural that he should feel both disquietude and alarm at the demands for money, unprecedented in respect of amount and frequency, made by Mr. Beauchamp during his stay in town. He was kept in profound darkness as to the destination of the money; and confounded at having to forward up to London the title-deeds and papers relating to most of the property. "What *can* my young squire be driving at?" said Pritchard to himself; and as he could devise no satisfactory answer, he began to fume and fret, and to indulge in melancholy speculations. He surmised that "all was not going on right at London:" for he was too much a man of business to be cajoled by the flimsy reasons assigned by Mr. Beauchamp for requiring the estate papers. He began to suspect that this young master was "taking to bad courses;" but being enjoined silence at his peril, he held his tongue, and shrugging his shoulders, "hoped the best." He longed every day to make or find an opportunity for communicating with his old mistress: yet how could he break his master's confidence, and risk the threatened penalty!—He received, however, a letter one morning which decided him. The fearful contents were as follow:—

“Dear and faithful old Pritchard—There are now only two ways in which you can show your regard for me—profound secrecy, and immediate attention to my directions. I have been engaged for some time in delusive speculations in London, and have been *dreadfully unfortunate*. I must have fifteen, or at the very lowest *ten* thousand pounds by this day week, or be ruined; and I purpose raising that sum by a mortgage on my property in —shire. I can see no other possible way of meeting my engagements, without compromising the character of our family—the honour of my name. Let me, therefore, have all the needful papers in time, in two days’ time at the latest. Dear old man!—for the love of God, and the respect you bear my father’s memory, keep all this to yourself, or consequences may follow which I tremble to think of! I am, &c. &c.

“HENRY BEAUCHAMP.

“— Hotel, 4 o’clock, A. M.”

This letter was written with evident hurry and trepidation; but not with more than its perusal occasioned the affrighted steward. He dropped it from his hands, elevated them and his eyes towards heaven, and turned deadly pale. He trembled from head to foot; and the only words he uttered were in a low moaning tone. “Oh, my poor old master! Wouldn’t it raise your bones out of the grave?” Could he any longer delay telling his mistress of the dreadful pass things were come to?

After an hour or two spent in terror and tears, he resolved, come what might, to set off for the Hall, seek an interview with Mrs. Beauchamp, and disclose every thing. He had scarce got half-way, when he was met by one of the Hall servants, who stopped him, saying, “Oh, Mr. Steward, I was coming down for you. Mistress is in a *way* this morning, and wants to see you directly.”



The old man hardly heard him out, and hurried on as fast as possible to the Hall, which was pervaded with an air of excitement and suspense. He was instantly conducted into Mrs. Beauchamp's private room. The good old lady sat in her easy-chair, her pallid features full of grief, and her gray locks straying in disorder from under the border of her cap. Every limb was in a tremor. On one side of her sat Ellen, in the same agitated condition as her aunt; and on the other stood a table, with brandy, harts-horn, &c. &c., and an open letter.

"Be seated, Pritchard," said the old lady, faintly. The steward placed his chair beside the table. "Why, what is the matter with *you*, Pritchard?" inquired Miss Beauchamp, startled by the agitation and fright manifested in the steward's countenance. He drew his hand across his forehead, and stammered that he was grieved to see them in such trouble, when he was interrupted by Mrs. Beauchamp putting the open letter into his hand, and telling him to read it. The steward could scarce adjust his glasses, for he trembled like an aspen-leaf. He read—

"MADAM,

"My client, Lady Hester Gripe, having consented to advance a *further* sum of 22,000*l.*, to Mr. Henry Beauchamp, your son, on mortgage of his estates in —shire, I beg to know whether you have any annuity or rent-charge issuing therefrom, and if so, to what amount. I beg you will consider this inquiry strictly confidential, as between Lady Hester and Mr. Beauchamp, or the negotiations will be broken off; for her ladyship's extreme caution has induced her to break through my promise to Mr. Beauchamp of not allowing you, or any one else, to know of the transaction. As, however, Mr. Beauchamp said that even if you *did* know it was not of much consequence, I presume I have not gone very

far wrong in yielding to her ladyship's importunities. May I beg the favour of a reply per return of post. I have the honour, &c. &c. &c.

"Furnival's Inn, London."

Before the staggered steward had got through half this letter, he was obliged to lay it down for a moment or two to recover from his trepidation.

"A FURTHER sum!" he muttered. He wiped the cold perspiration from his forehead, and dashed out the tears from his half-blinded eyes, and resumed his perusal of the letter, which shook in his hands. No one spoke a syllable; and when he had finished reading, he laid down the letter in silence. Mrs. Beauchamp sat leaning back in her chair, with her eyes closed. She murmured something which the straining ear of the steward could not catch.

"What was my lady saying, miss?" he inquired. Miss Beauchamp shook her head, without speaking, or removing her handkerchief from her face.

"Well, God's holy will be done!" exclaimed Mrs. Beauchamp, feebly, tasting a little brandy and water; "but I'm afraid my poor Henry and all of us are ruined!"

"God grant not, my lady! Oh, don't—don't say so, my lady!" sobbed the steward, dropping involuntarily upon his knees, and elevating his clasped hands upwards. "'Tis true, my lady," he continued, "Master Henry—for I can't help calling him so—has been a little wild in London—but *all* is not yet gone, oh no, ma'am, no!"

"You must, of course, have known all along of his doings—you *must*, Pritchard!" said, Mrs. Beauchamp, in a low tone.

"Why, yes, my lady, I have; but I've gone down on my knees every blessed night, and prayed that I might find a way of letting you know—"

"*Why* could you not have told me?" inquired Mrs. Beauchamp, looking keenly at the steward.

"Because, my lady, I was his steward, and bound to keep his confidence. He would have discharged me the moment I had opened my lips."

Mrs. Beauchamp made no reply. She saw the worthy man's dilemma, and doubted not his integrity, though she had entertained momentarily a suspicion of his guilty acquiescence.

"Have you ever heard, Pritchard, how the money has gone in London?"

"Never a breath, my lady, that I could rely on."

"What have you *heard*?" That he frequents gaming-houses?" inquired Mrs. Beauchamp, her features whitening as she went on. The steward shook his head. 'There was another mournful pause.

"Now, Pritchard," said Mrs. Beauchamp, with an effort to muster up all her calmness, "tell me, as in the sight of God, how much money has my son made away with since he left?"

The steward paused and hesitated.

"I must not be trifled with, Pritchard," continued Mrs. Beauchamp, solemnly, and with increasing agitation. The steward seemed calculating a moment.

"Why, my lady, if I must be plain, I'm afraid that twenty thousand pounds would not cover—"

"TWENTY THOUSAND POUNDS!" screamed Miss Beauchamp, springing out of her chair wildly; but her attention was in an instant absorbed by her aunt, who, on hearing the sum named by the steward, after moving her fingers for a moment or two, as if she were trying to speak, suddenly fell back in her seat and swooned.

To describe the scenes of consternation and despair which ensued would be impossible. Mrs. Beauchamp's feelings were several times urging her on the very borders of madness; and Miss Beauchamp looked the image of speechless, breathless horror. At length, however, Mrs. Beauchamp succeeded in overcoming her feelings—for she was a woman of unusual strength of mind—and instantly

addressed herself to meet the naked horrors of the case, and see if it were possible to discover or apply a remedy. After a day's anxious thought, and the *show* of a consultation with her distracted niece, she decided on the line of operations she intended to pursue.

To return, however, to her son. Things went on, as might be supposed from the situation in which we left him—worse and worse. Poor Beauchamp's life might justly be said to be a perpetual phrensy—passed in alternate paroxysms of remorse, despair, rage, fear, and all the other baleful passions that can tear and distract the human soul. He had become stupified, and could not fully comprehend the enormous ruin which he had precipitated upon himself—crushing at once “mind, body, and estate.” His motions seemed actuated by a species of diabolical influence. He saw the nest of hornets which he had lit upon, yet would not forsake the spot! Alas, Beauchamp was not the first who has felt the fatal *fascination* of play, the utter obliviousness of consequences which it induces! The demons who fluttered about him no longer thought of masking themselves, but stood boldly in all their naked hideousness before him. For weeks together he had one continual run of bad luck, yet still he lived and gambled on from week to week, from day to day, from hour to hour, in the delusive hope of recovering himself. His heart was paralyzed—its feelings all smothered beneath the perpetual pressure of a gamester's anxieties. It is not, therefore, difficult for the reader to conceive the ease with which he dismissed the less and less frequently intruding images—the pale, reproachful faces—of his mother and cousin!

Sir Edward Streighton, the most consummate tactician, sure, that ever breathed, had won thousands from Beauchamp, without affording him a tangible opportunity of breaking with him. On the contrary, the

more Beauchamp became involved the deeper he sunk into the whirlpool of destruction, the closer he clung to Sir Edward; as if clinging to the devil, in hell, would save one from its fires! The wily baronet had contrived to make himself, in a manner, indispensable to Beauchamp. It was Sir Edward who taught him the quickest way of turning lands into cash; Sir Edward who familiarized him with the correct principles of betting and handling the dice; Sir Edward who put him in the way of evading and defying his minor creditors; Sir Edward who feasted and fêted him out of his bitter ennui and thoughts of——shire; Sir Edward, who lent him hundreds at a moment's warning, and gave him the longest credit!

Is it really conceivable that Beauchamp could not see through the plausible scoundrel? inquires perhaps a reader. No, he did not—till the plot began to develop itself in the latter acts of the tragedy! And even when he did he still went on, and on, and on—trusting that in time he should outwit the subtle devil. Though he was a little shocked at finding himself so easily capable of such a thing, he resolved at last, in the forlorn hope of retrieving his circumstances, to meet *fraud with fraud*; a delusion not uncommon among the desperate victims of gambling, in the notion that they have suddenly hit on some trick by which they must infallibly win. This is the *ignis-fatuus* which often lights them to the fatal verge. Such a crotchet had latterly been flitting through the fancy of Beauchamp; and one night—or rather morning—after revolving the scheme over and over again in his racked brain, he started out of bed, struck a light, seized a pack of cards, and shivering with cold—for it was winter—sat calculating and manœuvring with them till he had satisfied himself of the accuracy of his plan; when he threw them down, blew out his candle, and leaped into bed again in a fit of guilty ecstasy. The more he

turned the project in his mind, the more and more feasible did it appear. He resolved to intrust no one breathing with his secret. Confident of success, and that with but little effort he had it in his power to *break the bank*, whenever, and as often as he pleased—he determined to put his plan into execution in a day or two, on a large scale; stake every penny he could possibly scrape together, and win triumphantly. He instantly set about procuring the requisite funds. His attorney—a gambler himself, whom he had latterly picked up, at the instance of Hillier, as “a monstrously convenient fellow,” soon contrived to cash his I.O.U.’s to the amount of 5000*l.*, on discovering that he had still available property in — shire, which he learned at a confidential interview with the solicitor in Furnival’s Inn, who was negotiating the loan of 22,000*l.* from Lady Gripe. He returned to make the hazardous experiment on the evening of the day on which he received the 5000*l.* from his attorney. On the morning of that day he was, further, to hear from his steward in the country respecting the mortgage of his last and best property.

That was a memorable, a terrible day to Beauchamp. It *began* with doubt—suspense—disappointment; for after awaiting the call of the postman, shaking with agitation, he caught a glimpse of his red jacket, *passing* by his door, on the other side of the street. Almost frantic, he threw up the window, and called out to him—but the man had “none to-day.” Beauchamp threw himself on his sofa, in agony unutterable. It was the first time that old Pritchard had ever neglected to return an answer by return of post, when ever so slightly requested. A thousand fears assailed him. Had his letter miscarried? Was Pritchard ill, dying, or dead? Had he been frightened into a disclosure to Mrs. Beauchamp? And did his MOTHER, at length—did ELLEN—know of his dreadful doings? The thought was

too frightful to dwell upon! Thoroughly unnerved, he flew to *brandy*—fiery fiend, lighting up in the brain the flames of madness! He scarce knew how to rest during the interval between breakfast and dinner; for at seven o'clock, he together with the rest of the infernal crew were to dine with Apsley. There was to be a strong muster; for one of the *decoys* had entrapped a wealthy simpleton who was to make his "first appearance" that evening. After walking for an hour, to and fro, he set out to call upon me. He was at my house by twelve o'clock. During his stay in town, I had frequently received him in quality of a patient, for trifling fits of indisposition, and low spirits. I had looked upon him merely as a fashionable young fellow, who was "upon town," doing his best to earn a little notoriety, such as was sought after by most young men of *spirit* and fortune! I also had been able to gather from what he let fall at several interviews, that the uneven spirits he possessed were owing to his gambling propensities: that his excitement or depression alternated with the good or ill luck he had at play. I felt interest in him; for there was about him an air of ingenuousness and straight-forwardness which captivated every one who spoke with him. His manners had all the ease and blandness of the finished gentleman; and when last I saw him, which was about two months before, he appeared in good health and cheerful spirits—a very fine, if not strictly handsome man. But *now* when he stood before me, wasted in person, and haggard in feature—full of irritability and petulance—I could scarce believe him the same man! I was going to ask him some question or other when he hastily interrupted me, by extending towards me his two hands, which shook almost like those of a man in the palsy, exclaiming, "*This—this*, doctor, is what I have come about. Can you cure *this*—by six o'clock to-day?" There was a wildness in his manner, which led me to suspect

that his intellect was disordered. He hurried on before I had time to get in a word—"If you cannot steady my nerves for a few hours, I am—" he suddenly paused, and with some confusion repeated his question. The extravagant impetuosity of his gestures and his whole demeanour alarmed me.

"Mr. Beauchamp," said I, seriously, "it is now two months since you honoured me with a visit; and your appearance since then is woefully changed. Permit me, as a respectful friend, to ask whether—?" He rose abruptly from his seat, and in a tone bordering on insult replied, "Dr. —, I came, not to gratify curiosity, but to receive your advice on the state of my health. If you are not disposed to afford it me, I am intruding."

"You mistake me, Mr. Beauchamp," I replied, calmly, "motives, and all. I do not wish to pry into your affairs. I desired only to ascertain whether or not your mind was at ease." While I was speaking, he seemed boiling over with suppressed irritability; and when I had done, he took his hat and stick, flung a guinea on my desk, and before I could recover from the astonishment his extraordinary behaviour occasioned me, strode out of the room.

How he contrived to pass the day he never knew; but about five o'clock he retired to his dressing-room to prepare for dinner.\* His agitation had reached such a height, that after several ineffectual attempts to shave himself, he was compelled to send for some one to perform that operation for him. When the duties of the dressing-room were completed, he returned to his sitting-room, took from his escrutoire the doomed bank-notes for 5000*l.*, and placed them in his pocketbook. A dense film floated before his eyes, when he attempted to look over the respective amounts of the bills, to see that all was correct. He

\* Mr. Beauchamp had removed from his hotel into private lodgings near Pall-Mall, about a month before the above-mentioned visit to me.



then seized a pack of cards, and tried over and over again to test the accuracy of his calculations. He laid them aside when he had satisfied himself—locked his door, opened his desk, and took out pen and paper. He then with his penknife picked the point of one of his fingers, filled his pen with the blood issuing from it, and wrote in letters of blood a solemn oath, that if he were but successful that evening “in winning back his own,” he would forsake cards and dice for ever, and never again be found within the precincts of a gaming-house to the latest hour of his life. I have seen that singular and affecting document. The letters, especially those forming the signature, are more like the tremulous handwriting of a man of eighty than of one but twenty-one! Perceiving that he was late, he hurriedly affixed a black seal to his signature, once more ran his eye over the doomed 5000*l.*, and sallied out to dinner.

When he reached Mr. Apsley’s, he found all the company assembled, apparently in high spirits, and all eager for dinner. You would not have thought of the black hearts that beat beneath such gay and pleasing exteriors as were collected round Apsley’s table! Not a syllable of allusion was made during dinner-time to the subject which filled every one’s thoughts—play. As if by mutual consent, that seemed the only interdicted topic; but as soon as dinner and dessert, both of them first-rate, were over, a perfectly-understood *pause* took place; and Beauchamp, who, with the aid of frequent draughts of champaign, had worked himself up to the proper pitch, was the first to propose, with eagerness, the fatal adjournment to the gaming-table. Every one rose in an instant from his seat, as if by appointed signal, and in less than five minutes’ time they were all, with closed doors, seated around the tables.

“Here piles of cards, and there the damned dice.”

They opened with hazard. Beauchamp was the

first who threw, and he lost; but as the stake was comparatively trifling, he neither was, nor appeared to be, annoyed. He was saving himself for Rouge et Noir! The rest of the company proceeded with the game, and got gradually into deeper play, till at length heavy betting was begun. Beauchamp, who declined joining them, sat watching with peculiar feelings of mingled sympathy and contempt the poor fellow whom the gang were "pigeoning." How painfully it reminded him of his own initiation! A throng of bitter recollections crowded irresistibly through his mind, as he sat for a while with leisure for contemplation. The silence that was maintained was broken only by the rattling of the dice-box, and an occasional whisper when the dice were thrown.

The room in which they were sitting was furnished with splendour and elegance. The walls were entirely concealed beneath valuable pictures, in massive and tasteful frames, the gilding of which glistened with a peculiarly rich effect beneath the light of a noble or-molu lamp, suspended from the ceiling. Ample curtains of yellow-flowered satin, drawn closely together, concealed the three windows with their rich draperies; and a few Gothic-fashioned bookcases, well filled, were stationed near the corners of the room, with rare specimens of Italian statuary placed upon them. The furniture was all of the most fashionable and elegant patterns; and as the trained eye of Beauchamp scanned it over, and marked the correct taste with which every thing was disposed, the thought forced itself upon him—"How many have been beggared to pay for all this!" His heart fluttered. He gazed on the flushed features, the eager eyes, the agitated gestures of those who sat at the table. Directly opposite was Sir Edward Streighton, looking attentively at the caster—his fine expansive forehead bordered with slight streaks of black hair, and his large lustrous eyes glancing like lightning from the thrower to the dice, and from the

dice to the betters. His features, regular, and once even handsome, bore now the deep traces of long and harrowing anxiety. "O that one," thought Beauchamp, "so capable of better things, bearing on his brow nature's signet of superiority, should have sunk into—a *swindler*!" While these thoughts were passing through his mind, Sir Edward suddenly looked up, and his eyes settled for an instant on Beauchamp. Their expression almost withered him! He thought he was gazing on "the dark and guilty one" who had coldly led him up to ruin's brink, and was waiting to precipitate him. His thoughts then wandered away to long-banished scenes—his aged mother, his ruined, forsaken Ellen, both of whom he was beggaring, and breaking their hearts. A mist seemed diffused through the room, his brain reeled; his long-stunned heart revived for a moment, and smote him heavily. "O that I had but an opportunity, ever so slight an opportunity," he thought, "of breaking from this horrid enthrallment, at *any* cost!"

He started from his painful revery, and stepped to a side-table on which a large bowl of champagne-punch had just been placed, and sought solace in its intoxicating fumes. He resumed his seat at the table; and he had looked on scarcely a few minutes, before he felt a sudden, unaccountable impulse to join in at hazard. He saw Apsley placing in his pocketbook some bank-notes, which he had at that moment received from the poor victim before spoken of, and instantly betted with him heavily on the next throw. Apsley, somewhat surprised, but not ruffled, immediately took him; the dice were thrown, and to his own astonishment, and that of all present, Beauchamp won 300*l.*—actually, *bona fide*, won 300*l.* from Apsley, who for once was off his guard! The loser was nettled, and could with difficulty conceal his chagrin; but he had seen, while Beauchamp was in the act of opening his pocketbook, the amount of one or two of his largest bills, and his passion subsided.

At length his hour arrived; Rouge et Noir followed hazard, and Beauchamp's pulse quickened. When it came to his turn, he took out his pocket-book and coolly laid down stakes which aimed at the bank. Not a word was spoken; but looks of wonder and doubt glanced darkly around the table. What was the fancied manœuvre which Beauchamp now proceeded to practise I know not, for, thank God, I am ignorant—except on hearsay—of both the principles and practice of gaming. The eagle-eye of Apsley, the *tailleur*, was on Beauchamp's every movement. He tried—he lost *half* his large stake! He pressed his hand upon his forehead—he saw that every thing depended on his calmness. The voice of Apsley sounded indistinctly in his ears, calling out, "*un refait trente et un!*" Beauchamp suffered his stakes to remain, and he determined by the next event. He still had confidence in his scheme; but alas, the bubble at length burst, and Beauchamp in a trice found himself minus 3000*l.* All hope was now over, for his trick was clearly worth nothing, and he had lost every earthly opportunity of recovering himself. YET HE WENT ON—and on—and on; and on ran the losing colour, till Beauchamp lost every thing he had brought with him! He sat down, sunk his head upon his breast, and a ghastly hue overspread his face. He was offered unlimited credit. Apsley gave him a slip of paper with I. O. U. on it, telling him to fill it up with his name, and any sum he chose. Beauchamp threw it back, exclaiming, in an undertone, "No,—swindled out of *all*."

"What did you say, sir?" inquired Apsley, rising from the table, and approaching his victim.

"Merely that I had been swindled out of all my fortune," replied Beauchamp, without rising from his seat. There was a dead silence.

"But, my good sir, don't you know that such language will never *do*?" inquired Apsley, in a cold contemptuous tone, and with a manner exquisitely irritating.

Half-maddened with his losses, with despair, and fury, Beauchamp sprung out of his chair towards Apsley, and with an absolute *howl*, dashed both his fists into his face. Consternation seized every one present. Table, cards, and bank-notes, all were deserted, and some threw themselves round Beauchamp, others round Apsley, who, sudden as had been the assault upon him, had so quickly thrown up his arms, that he parried the chief force of Beauchamp's blow, and received but a slight injury over his right eye.

"Pho! pho! the boy is *drunk*," he exclaimed coolly, observing his frantic assailant struggling with those who held him.

"Ruffian! swindler! liar!" gasped Beauchamp. Apsley laughed aloud.

"What! dare not you strike me in return?" roared Beauchamp.

"Ay, ay, my fine fellow," replied Apsley, with imperturbable nonchalance; "but dare *you* have struck me, when you were in cool blood, and I on my guard?"

"*Struck* you, indeed, you abhorred—"

"Let us see then what we can do in the morning, when we've slept over it," retorted Apsley, pitching his card towards him contemptuously. "But, in the meantime, we must send for constables, unless our young friend here becomes quiet. Come, Streighton, you are croupier—come, Hillier—Bruton—all of you, come, play out the stakes, or we shall forget where we were."

Poor Beauchamp seemed suddenly calmed when Apsley's card was thrown towards him, and with such cold scorn. He pressed his hands to his bursting temples, turned his despairing eyes upwards, and muttered, as if he were half-choked, "Not yet—not yet!" He paused, and the dreadful paroxysm seemed to subside. He threw one of his cards to Apsley, exclaiming hoarsely, "When, where, and how you will, sir!"

"Why, come now, Beau, that's right—*that's* like a man!" said Apsley, with mock civility. "Suppose we say to-morrow morning? I have cured you of roguery to-night, and, with the blessing of God, will cure you of cowardice to-morrow. But, pardon me, your last stakes are forfeit," he added abruptly, seeing Beauchamp approach the spot where his last stake, a bill for 100*l.*, was lying, not having been taken up. He looked appealingly to the company, who decided instantly against him. Beauchamp, with the hurry and agitation consequent on his assault upon Apsley, had forgotten that he had really played away the note. "Well, sir, there remains nothing to keep me here," said Beauchamp, calmly—with the calmness of despair—"except settling our morning's meeting. Name your friend, sir," he continued, sternly—yet his heart was breaking within him.

"Oh, ay," replied Apsley, carelessly looking up from the cards he was shuffling and arranging. "Let me see. Hillier, will you do the needful for me? I leave every thing in your hands." After vain attempts to bring about a compromise—for your true gamblers hate such affairs, not from personal fear, but the publicity they occasion to their doings—matters were finally arranged; Sir Edward Streighton undertaking for Beauchamp. The hour of meeting was half past six o'clock in the morning; and the place, a field near Knightsbridge. The unhappy Beauchamp then withdrew, after shaking Sir Edward by the hand, who promised to call at his lodgings by four o'clock—"for we shall break up by that time, I dare say," he whispered.

When the door was closed upon Beauchamp, he reeled off the steps, and staggered along the streets like a drunken man. Whether or not he was deceived, he knew not; but in passing under the windows of the room where the fiendish conclave were sitting, he fancied he heard the sound of loud laugh-

ter. It was about two o'clock of a winter's morning. The snow fell fast, and the air was freezingly cold. Not a soul but himself seemed stirring. A watchman, seeing his unsteady gait, crossed the street, touched his hat, and asked if he should call him a coach; but he was answered with such a ghastly imprecation that he slunk back in silence. Tongue cannot tell the distraction and misery with which Beauchamp's soul was shaken. Hell seemed to have lit its raging fires within him. He felt affrighted at being alone in the desolate, dark, deserted streets. His last six months' life seemed unrolled suddenly before him like a blighting scroll, written in letters of fire. Overcome by his emotions, his shaking knees refused their support, and he sat down on the steps of a house in Piccadilly. He told me afterward, that he distinctly recollected feeling for some implement of destruction; and that if he had discovered his penknife, he should assuredly have cut his throat. After sitting on the stone for about a quarter of an hour, bareheaded—for he had removed his hat, that his burning forehead might be cooled—he made towards his lodgings. He thundered impetuously at the door, and was instantly admitted. His shivering, half-asleep servant fell back before his master's affrighting countenance, and glaring bloodshot eyes. "Lock the door, sir, and follow me to my room," said Beauchamp, in a loud voice.

"Sir, sir, sir," stammered the servant, as if he were going to ask some question.

"Silence, sir!" thundered his master; and the man, laying down his candle on the stairs, went and barred the door. Beauchamp hurried up stairs, and opened the door of his sitting-room. He was astonished and alarmed to find a blaze of light in the room. Suspecting fire, he rushed into the middle of the room, and beheld his mother and cousin bending towards him, and staring fixedly at him with the hue

and expression of two marble images of horror! His mother's white hair hung dishevelled down each side of her ghastly features; and her eyes, with those of her niece, who sat beside her clasping her aunt convulsively round the waist, seemed on the point of starting from their sockets. They moved not, they spoke not. The hideous apparition vanished in an instant from the darkening eyes of Beauchamp, for he dropped the candle he held in his hand, and fell at full length senseless on the floor.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was no ocular delusion—nothing spectral, but **HORROR** looking out through breathing flesh and blood, in the persons of Mrs. Beauchamp and her niece.

The resolution which Mrs. Beauchamp had formed, on an occasion which will be remembered by the reader, was to go up direct to London, and try the effect of a sudden appearance before her erring, but she hoped not irreclaimable son. Such an interview might *startle* him into a return to virtue. Attended by the faithful Pritchard, they had arrived in town that very day, put up at an hotel in the neighbourhood, and, without pausing to take refreshments, hurried to Mr. Beauchamp's lodgings, which they reached only two hours after he had gone out to dinner. Seeing his desk open, and a paper lying upon it, the old lady took it up, and, freezing with fright, read the oath before named, evidently written in *blood*. Her son, then, was gone to the gaming-table in the spirit of a forlorn hope, and was that night to complete his and their ruin! Yet, what could they do? Mr. Beauchamp's valet did not know where his master was gone to dinner, nor did any one in the house, or they would have sent off instantly to apprise him of their arrival. As it was, however, they were obliged to wait for it; and it may therefore be conceived in what an ecstasy of agony these two poor ladies had been sitting, without tasting wine or food, till half past two o'clock in the



morning, when they heard his startling knock—his fierce voice speaking in curses to the valet, and at length beheld him rush, madman-like, into their presence, as has been described.

When the valet came up-stairs from fastening the street-door, he saw the sitting-room door wide open; and peeping through on his way up to bed, was confounded to see three prostrate figures on the floor—his master here, and there the two ladies locked in one another's arms, all motionless. He hurried to the bell, and pulled it till it broke, but not till it had rung such a startling peal as woke everybody in the house, who presently heard him shouting at the top of his voice, "Murder! Murder! Murder!" All the affrighted inmates were in a few seconds in the room, half-dressed, and their faces full of terror. The first simultaneous impression on the minds of the group was, that the persons lying on the floor had been *poisoned*; and under such impression was it that I and two neighbouring surgeons were summoned on the scene. By the time I had arrived, Mrs. Beauchamp was reviving; but her niece had swooned away again. The first impulse of the mother, as soon as her tottering limbs could support her weight, was to crawl trembling to the insensible body of her son. Supported in the arms of two female attendants, who had not as yet been able to lift her from the floor, she leaned over the prostrate form of Beauchamp, and murmured, "Oh, Henry! Henry! Love! My only love!" Her hand played slowly over his damp features, and strove to part the hair from the forehead; but it suddenly ceased to move, and on looking narrowly at her, she was found to have swooned again. Of all the sorrowful scenes it has been my fate to witness, I never encountered one of deeper distress than this. Had I known at the time the relative situations of the parties!

I directed all my attentions to Mr. Beauchamp, while the other medical gentlemen busied themselves

with Mrs. Beauchamp and her niece. I was not quite sure whether my patient were not in a fit of epilepsy or apoplexy, for he lay motionless, drawing his breath at long and painful intervals, with a little occasional convulsive twitching of the features. I had his coat taken off immediately, and bled him from the arm copiously; soon after which he recovered his consciousness, and allowed himself to be led to bed. He had hardly been undressed before he fell fast asleep. His mother was bending over him in speechless agony—for, ill and feeble as she was, we could not prevail on her to go to bed—and I was watching both with deep interest and curiosity, convinced that I was witnessing a glimpse of some domestic tragedy, when there was heard a violent knocking and ringing at the street-door. Every one started, and with alarm inquired what that *could* be? Who could be seeking admission at four o'clock in the morning?

Sir Edward Streighton! whose cab, with a case of duelling pistols on the seat, was standing at the door waiting to convey himself and Beauchamp to the scene of possible slaughter fixed on overnight. He would take no denial from the servant; declared his business to be of the most pressing kind; and affected to disbelieve the fact of Beauchamp's illness—"it was all miserable fudge," and he was heard muttering something about "*cowardice!*" The strange pertinacity of Sir Edward brought me down stairs. He stood fuming and cursing in the hall; but started on seeing me come down with my candle in my hand, and he turned pale.

"Dr. —!" he exclaimed, taking off his hat; for he had once or twice seen me, and instantly recognised me, "why, in the name of heaven, what is the matter? Is he ill? Is he dead? What?"

"Sir Edward," I replied coldly, "Mr. Beauchamp is in dangerous, if not dying, circumstances."

"*Dying* circumstances!" he echoed with an

alarmed air. "Why—has he—has he attempted to commit suicide?" he stammered.

"No, but he has had a fit, and is insensible in bed. You will permit me to say, Sir Edward," I continued, a suspicion occurring to me of his design in calling, "that this untimely visit looks as if—"

"That is my business, doctor," he replied haughtily, "not yours. My errand is of the highest importance; and it is fitting I should be assured, on your solemn word of honour, of the *reality* of Mr. Beauchamp's illness."

"Sir Edward Streighton," said I, indignantly, "you have had my answer, which you may believe or disbelieve, as you think proper; but I will take good care that you do not ascend one of these stairs to-day."

"I understand it all!" he answered, with a significant scowl, and left the house. I then hastened back to my patient, whom I now viewed with greater interest than before; for I saw that he was to have fought a duel that morning. Coupling present appearances with Mr. Beauchamp's visit to me the day before, and the known character of Sir Edward as a professed gambler, the key to the whole seemed to me that there had been a gaming-house quarrel.

The first sensible words that Mr. Beauchamp spoke were to me: "Has Sir Edward Streighton called?—Is it four o'clock yet?" and he started up in his bed, staring wildly around him. Seeing himself in bed, candles about him, and *me* at his side, he exclaimed, "Why, I recollect nothing of it! Am I wounded? What has become of Apsley?" He placed his hand on the arm from which he had been bled, and feeling it bandaged, "Ah! in the arm—How strange that I have forgotten it all! How did I get on at hazard and Rouge et Noir? Doctor, am I badly wounded?—bone broken?"

My conjecture was now verified beyond a doubt!

He dropped asleep from excessive exhaustion, while I was gazing at him. I had answered none of his questions, which were proposed in a dreamy unconnected style, indicating that his senses were disturbed. Finding that I could be of no further service at present, I left him, and betook myself to the room to which Mrs. Beauchamp had been removed, while I was conversing with Sir Edward. I found her in bed, attended by Miss Beauchamp, who, though still extremely languid, and looking the picture of broken-heartedness, had made a great exertion to rouse herself. Mrs. Beauchamp looked dreadfully ill. The nerves seemed to have received a shock from which she might be long in recovering. "Now what is breaking these ladies' hearts?" thought I, as I looked from one agitated face to the other.

"How is my son?" inquired Mrs. Beauchamp, faintly.

I told her I thought there was no danger, and that with repose he would soon recover.

"Pray, madam, allow me to ask, has he had any sudden fright? I suspect—" Both shook their heads and hung them down.

"Well—he is alive, thank heaven—but a *beggar*!" said Mrs. Beauchamp. "Oh, doctor, he hath *fallen among thieves*! They have robbed, and would have slain my son—my first born—my only son!"

I expressed deep sympathy. I said, "I suspect, madam, that something very unfortunate has happened."

She interrupted me by asking me, after a pause, if I knew nothing of his practices in London for the last few months, as she had seen my name several times mentioned in his letters as his medical adviser. I made no reply. I did not even hint my suspicions that he had been a frequenter of the gaming-table; but my looks startled her.

"Oh, doctor, for the love of God be frank, and

save a widowed mother's heart from breaking! Is there no door open for him to escape?"

Seeing they could extract little or no satisfactory explanations from me, they ceased asking, and resigned themselves to tears and sorrow. After rendering them what little service was in my power, and looking in at Mr. Beauchamp's room, where I found him still in a comfortable sleep, I took my departure, for the dull light of a winter morning was already stealing into the room, and I had been there ever since a little before four o'clock. All my way home I felt sure that my patient was one of the innumerable victims of gambling, and had involved his family in his ruin.

Mr. Beauchamp, with the aid of quiet and medicine, soon recovered sufficiently to leave his bed; but his mind was evidently ill at ease. Had I known at the time what I was afterward apprized of, with what intense and sorrowful interest should I have regarded him!

The next week was all agony, humiliation, confessions, and forgiveness. The only one item in the black catalogue which he omitted or misrepresented was the duel he was to have fought. He owned, after much pressing, in order to quiet his mother and cousin, that he *had* fought and escaped unhurt. But Beauchamp, in his own mind, was resolved at all events to give Apsley the meeting on the very earliest opportunity. His own *honour* was at stake! His own revenge was to be sated! The first thing, therefore, that Beauchamp did, after he was sufficiently recovered to be left alone, was to drop a hasty line to Sir Edward Streighton, informing him that he was now ready and willing—nay, anxious—to give Apsley the meeting which he had been prevented doing only by his sudden and severe illness. He entreated Sir Edward to continue, as heretofore, his *friend*, and to hasten the matter as much as possible; adding, that whatever event might attend it

was a matter of utter indifference to one who was weary of life. Sir Edward, who began to wish himself out of a very disagreeable affair, returned him a prompt, polite, but not very cordial answer; the substance of which was, that Apsley, who happened to be with Sir Edward when Beauchamp's letter arrived, was perfectly ready to meet him at the place formerly appointed, at seven o'clock on the ensuing morning. Beauchamp was somewhat shocked at the suddenness of the affair. How was he to part, overnight—possibly for ever—from his beloved, and injured as beloved, mother and cousin? Whatever might be the issue of the affair, what a monster of perfidy and ingratitude must he appear to them!

Full of these bitter, distracting thoughts, he locked his room door, and proceeded to make his will. He left "every thing he had remaining on earth, in any shape," to his mother, except a hundred guineas to his cousin to buy a mourning ring. That over, and some few other arrangements completed, he repaired, with a heart that smote him at every step, to his mother's bedside; for it was night, and the old lady, besides, scarce ever left her bed. The unusual fervour of his embraces, together with momentary fits of absence, might have challenged observation and suspicion; but they did not. He told me afterward that the anguish he suffered, while repeating and going through the customary evening adieus to his mother and cousin, might have atoned for years of guilt!

After a nearly sleepless night, Beauchamp rose about five o'clock, and dressed himself. On quitting his room, perhaps the last time he should quit it alive, he had to pass by his mother's door. There he fell down on his knees; and continued with clasped hands and closed eyes, till his smothering emotions warned him to be gone. He succeeded in getting out of the house without alarming any one; and, muffled in his cloak, made his way as fast as possible

to Sir Edward Streighton's. It was a miserable morning. The untrodden snow lay nearly a foot deep on the streets, and was yet fluttering fast down. Beauchamp found it so fatiguing to *plunther* on through the deep snow, and was so benumbed with cold, that he called a coach. He had great difficulty in rousing the driver, who, spite of the bitter inclemency of the weather, was sitting on his box, poor fellow, fast asleep, and even snoring—a complete hillock of snow, which lay nearly an inch thick upon him. How Beauchamp envied him! The very horses, too, lean and scraggy as they looked—fast asleep—how he envied *them*!

It was nearly six o'clock when Beauchamp reached Sir Edward's residence. The baronet was up, and waiting for him.

"How d'ye do, Beauchamp—how d'ye do! How the d—— are you to fight in such a fog as this?" he inquired, looking through the window, and shuddering at the cold.

"It must be managed, I suppose. Put us up as close as you like," replied Beauchamp, gloomily.

"I've done all in my power, my dear fellow, to settle matters amicably, but 'tis in vain, I'm afraid. You *must* exchange shots, you know! I have no doubt however," he continued, with a significant smile, "that the thing will be properly conducted. *Life is valuable, Beauchamp!* You understand me?"

"It is *not* to me—I hate Apsley as I hate hell."

"My God, Beauchamp! What a bloody humour you have risen in!" exclaimed the baronet, with an anxious smile. He paused, as if for an answer, but Beauchamp continued silent. "Ah, then, the sooner to business the better. And hark'ee, Beauchamp," said Sir Edward, briskly, "have your wits about you, for Apsley, let me tell you, is a splendid shot."

"Pooh!" exclaimed Beauchamp, smiling bitterly. He felt cold from head to foot, and even trembled; for a thousand fond thoughts gushed over him. He

felt faint, and would have asked for a glass of wine or spirits; but after Sir Edward's last remark, that was out of the question. It might be misconstrued!

They were on the ground by seven o'clock. It had ceased snowing, and in its stead a small drizzling rain was falling. The fog continued so dense as to prevent their seeing each other distinctly at a few yards' distance. This puzzled the parties not a little, and threatened to interfere with *business*.

"Every thing, by —, is against us to-day!" exclaimed Sir Edward, placing under his arm the pistol he was loading, and buttoning his great-coat up to the chin, "this fog will hinder your seeing one another, and this — rain will soak through to the priming! In fact, you must be put up within eight or ten feet of one another."

"Settle all that as soon, and as you like," replied Beauchamp, walking away a few steps.

"Halloo! here!—here!" cried Sir Edward. "Here! here we are, Hillier," seeing three figures, within a few yards of them, searching about for them. Apsley had brought with him Hillier and a young surgeon.

The fog thickened rapidly as soon as they had come together, and Apsley and Beauchamp took their stands a little distance from their respective friends.

"Any chance of apology?" inquired Hillier, a keen-eyed, hawk-nosed, *ci-devant militaire*.

"The devil a bit. Horridly savage!"

"Then let us make haste," replied Hillier, with *sang froid*.

"Apsley got — drunk after you left this morning, and I've had only half an hour's sleep," continued Hillier, little suspecting that every word they were saying was overheard by Beauchamp, who, shrouded by the fog, was standing at but three or four yards' distance.

"Apsley drunk! Then 'twill give Beauchamp,



poor devil, a bit of a chance—and this fog! How does he stand it? Cool?”

“As a cucumber. That is to say, he is *cold*—very *cold*—ha! ha! But I don’t think he funks either. Told me he hated Apsley like —, and we might put him up as we liked! But what does *your* man say?”

“Oh, full of ‘*pooh-poohs*!’ and calls it a mere bagatelle.”

“Do mischief!—eh?”

“Oh, he’s going to try for the arm or knee, for the fellow hurt his eye the other night.”

“What, in this fog! My —!”

“Oh, true. Forgot that. What’s to be done! Come, it’s clearing off a bit.”

“I say, Hillier,” whispered Sir Edward in a low tone, “suppose *mischief* should be done?”

“Suppose!—and *suppose* it shouldn’t? You’ll never get your pistol drove! So, now!”

“Now, how far?”

“Oh, the usual distance. Step them out the baker’s dozen. Give them every chance, for God favours them.”

“But they won’t see one another any more than the dead! ’Tis a complete farce—and the men themselves will grumble. How can they *mark*?”

“Why, here’s a gate close by. I came past it. ’Tis white and large. Put them in a line with it.”

“Why, Beauchamp will be hit, poor devil!”

“Never mind—deserves it, d—— fool!”

The distance duly stepped out, each stationed his man.

“I shall not stand against this gate, Streighton,” said Beauchamp, calmly. The baronet laughed, and replied, “Oh, you’re right, my dear fellow. We’ll put you, then, about three or four yards from it on one side.” They were soon stationed, and pistols put into their hands. Both exclaimed loudly that they could not see their man. “So much the

better. A chance shot!—We sha'n't put you any nearer," said Sir Edward, and the principals sullenly acquiesced.

"Now take care to shoot at one another, not at *us*, in this cursed fog," said Sir Edward, so as to be heard by both. "We shall move off about twenty yards away to the right here. I will say, One! two! three! and then do as you like."

"The Lord have mercy on you!" added Hillier.

"Come, quick! quick! 'Tis cursedly cold, and I must be at —'s by ten," cried Apsley, petulantly. The two seconds and the surgeon moved off. Beauchamp could not catch even a glimpse of his antagonist, to whom he was equally invisible. "Well," thought they, "if we miss we can fire again!" In a few moments Sir Edward's voice called out loudly, "One!—two!—three!"

Both pistol-fires flashed through the fog at once, and the seconds rushed up to their men.

"Beauchamp, where are you?" "Apsley, where are you?"

"Here!" replied Beauchamp; but there was no answer from Apsley. He had been shot through the head; and in groping about, terror-struck, in search of him, they stumbled over his corpse. The surgeon was in an instant on his knees beside him, with his instruments out, but in vain. It was all over with Apsley. That heartless villain was gone to his account. Beauchamp's bullet, chance shot as it was, had entered the right temple, passed through the brain, and lodged in the opposite temple. The only blood about him was a little which had trickled from the wound down the cheek, on the shirt collar.

"*Is he killed?*" groaned Beauchamp, bending over the body, and staring at it affrightedly; but before he could receive an answer from Sir Edward or Hillier, who, almost petrified, grasped each a hand of the dead body, he had swooned. The first words he heard on recovering his senses were, "Fly! fly!"

fly!" Not comprehending their import, he languidly opened his eyes, and saw people, some standing round him, and others bearing away the dead body. Again he relapsed into unconsciousness—from which he was aroused by some one grasping him rather roughly by the shoulder. His eyes glanced on the head of a constable's staff, and he heard the words, "You're in my custody, sir."

He started, and stared in the officer's face.

"There's a coach awaiting for you, sir, by the roadside, to take you to — Office." Beauchamp offered no resistance. He whispered merely, "Does my mother know?"

How he rode, or with whom, he knew not; but he found himself, about nine o'clock, alighting at the door of the Police Office, more dead than alive.

While Beauchamp had lain insensible on the ground, the fog had completely vanished; and Sir Edward and Hillier, finding it dangerous to remain, as passengers from the roadside could distinctly see the gloomy group, made off, leaving Beauchamp and the surgeon with the corpse of Apsley. Sir Edward flew to his own house, accompanied by Hillier; the latter hastily wrote a note to Apsley's brother, informing him of the event; and Sir Edward despatched his own valet confidentially to the valet of Beauchamp, communicating to him the dreadful situation of his master, and telling him to break it as he could to his friends. The valet instantly set off for the field of death, not, however, without apprizing, by his terrified movements, his fellow-servants that something terrible had happened. He found a few people still standing on the fatal spot, from whom he learned that his master had been conveyed a few minutes before to the — street Office—whither he repaired as fast as a hackney-coach could carry him. When he arrived, an officer was endeavouring to arouse Mr. Beauchamp from his stupor, by forcing on him a little brandy and

water, in which he partly succeeded. Pale and breathless, the valet rushed through the crowd of officers and people about the door, and flung himself at his master's feet, wringing his hands and crying, "Oh master! dear master! what have you done! You'll kill your mother!" Even the myrmidons of justice seemed affected at the poor fellow's anguish; but his unhappy master only stared at him vacantly, without speaking. When he was conducted into the presence of the magistrate he was obliged to be supported with a chair: for he was overcome, not only with the horrible dilemma to which he had just brought himself; but his spirits and health were completely broken down, as well by his recent illness as the wasting anxieties and agonies he had endured for months past. The brother of Apsley was present, raving like a madman; and he pressed the case vehemently against the prisoner. Bail was offered, but refused: and Beauchamp was eventually committed to Newgate, to take his trial at the next Old Bailey sessions. Sir Edward Streighton and Hillier surrendered in the course of the day, but were liberated on their own heavy recognisances, and two sureties each in a thousand pounds, to appear and take their trial at the Old Bailey.

But what tongue can tell, what pen describe the maddening horrors, the despair of the mother and the betrothed bride? Not *mine*. Their sorrows shall be sacred for me.

"For not to me belongs  
To sound the mighty sorrows of thy breast,  
But rather far off stand, with head and hands  
Hung down in fearful sympathy. Thy Ark of grief  
Let me not touch presumptuous."

To keep up, however, in some degree, the *continuity* of this melancholy narrative, I shall state merely, that I, who was called in to both mother and niece a few minutes after the news had smitten them like the stroke of lightning to the earth, wondered,

was even confounded, to find either of them survive it, or retain a glimpse of reason. The conduct of Ellen Beauchamp ennobled her, in my estimation, into something above humanity. She succeeded at length in overmastering her anguish and agitation, in order that she might minister to her afflicted aunt, in whose sorrow all consciousness or appreciation of her own seemed to have merged. For a whole week Mrs. Beauchamp hovered, so to speak, about the open door of death, held back, apparently, only by a sweet spirit of sympathy and consolation—her niece! The first words she distinctly articulated, after many hours spent in delirious muttering, were, "I will see my son—I will see my son!" It was not judged safe to trust her alone without medical assistance for at least a fortnight. Poor Pritchard for several nights slept outside her bedroom door.

The first twenty-four hours of Beauchamp's incarceration in Newgate were horrible. He who, on such slight temptation, had beggared himself, and squandered away in infamy the fortunes of his fathers; who had broken the hearts of his idolizing mother, his betrothed wife; who had **MURDERED A MAN**—was now **ALONE!**—alone in the sullen gloom of a prison.

The transaction above detailed made much noise in London; and disguised as it here is, in respect of names, dates, and places, there must be many who will recollect the *true facts*. There is **ONE** whose heart these pages will wither while he is reading!

Most of the journals, influenced by the vindictive misrepresentations of Apsley's brother, gave a most distorted version of the affair, and, presumptuously anticipating the decrees of justice, threw a gloomy hue over the prospects of the prisoner. He would certainly be convicted of *murder*, they said, executed and dissected! The judges were, or ought to be, resolved to put down duelling, and "never was there a more fitting opportunity for making a solemn ex-

ample," &c. &c. One of the papers gave dark hints, that on the day of trial some extraordinary and inculpatory disclosures would be made concerning the events which led to the duel.

Mrs. Beauchamp made three attempts, during the third week of her son's imprisonment, to visit him, but in each instance fainted on being lifted into the carriage; and at length desisted, on my representing the danger which attended her attempts. Her niece also seemed more dead than alive when she accompanied her aunt. Pritchard, however, the faithful, attended Pritchard, often went to and fro between Newgate and the house where Mrs. Beauchamp lodged, two or three times a-day, so that they were thus enabled to keep up a constant but sorrowful correspondence. Several members of the family had hurried up to London the instant they received intelligence of the disastrous circumstances above detailed, and it was well they did. Had it not been for their affectionate interference, the most lamentable consequences might have been anticipated to mother, niece, and son. I, also, at Mrs. Beauchamp's pressing instance, called several times on her son, and found him, on each visit, sinking into deeper and deeper despondency: yet he seemed hardly sensible of the wretched reality and extent of his misery. Many a time when I entered his room—which was the most comfortable the governor could supply him—I found him seated at the table, with his head buried in his arms; and I was sometimes obliged to shake him, in order that I might arouse him from his lethargy. Even then he could seldom be drawn into conversation. When he spoke of his mother and cousin, it was with an apathy which affected me more than the most passionate lamentations.

I brought him one day a couple of white winter-roses from his mother and Ellen, telling him they were sent as pledges of love and hope. He snatched

them out of my hands, kissed them, and buried them in his bosom, saying, "Lie you *there*, emblems of innocence, and blanch this black heart of mine if you can!" I shall never forget the expression, nor the stern and gloomy manner with which it was uttered. I sat silent for some minutes.

"Doctor, doctor," said he, hastily placing his hands on his breast, "they are—I feel they are thawing my frozen feelings! they are softening my hard heart! Oh God, merciful God, I am becoming *human* again!" He looked at me with an eagerness and vivacity to which he had long been a stranger. He extended to me both his hands; I clasped them heartily, and he burst into tears. He wept loud and long.

"The light of eternal truth breaks in upon me! Oh my God, hast thou then not forgotten me?" He fell down on his knees and continued, "Why, what a wretch—what a monster I have been!" He started to his feet. "Ah, ha! I've been in the lion's den, and am plucked out of it!" I saw that his heart was overburdened, and his head not yet cleared. I said therefore little, and let him go on by fits and starts.

"Why, I've been all along in a dream! Henry Beauchamp in Newgate! On a charge of *murder*!—Frightful!" He shuddered. "And my mother—my blessed mother!—where—how is she? Her heart bleeds—but no—no—no, it is not broken!—and *Ellen*—Ellen—Ellen." After several short choking sobs, he burst again into a torrent of tears. I strove to sooth him, but "he would not be comforted." "Doctor, say nothing to console me!—Don't, don't, or I shall go mad! Let me *feel* all my guilt; let it crush me!"

My time being expired, I rose and bade him adieu. He was in a musing mood, as if he were striving, with painful effort, to propose some subject to his thoughts—to keep some object before his mind; but

could not. I promised to call again between then and the day of his trial, which was but a week off.

The excruciating anxiety endured by these unhappy ladies, Mrs. Beauchamp and her niece, as the day of trial approached—when the life or death of one, in whom both their souls were bound up must be decided on—defies description. I never saw it equalled. To look on the settled pallor—the hollow, haggard features—the quivering limbs of Mrs. Beauchamp—was heart-breaking. She seemed like one in the palsy. All the soothing as well as strengthening medicines which all my experience could suggest were rendered unavailing to *such* a “mind diseased,” to “raze” *such* a written sorrow from the brain.” Ellen, too, was wasting by her side to a mere shadow. She had written letter after letter to her cousin, and the only answer she received was,—

“Cousin Ellen! How can you, how *dare* you write to such a wretch as—Henry Beauchamp!”

These two lines almost broke the poor girl's heart. What was to become of her? Had she clung to her cousin through guilt and through blood, and did he now refuse to love her, or receive her proffered sympathy? She never wrote again to him till her aunt implored, nay, commanded her to write, for the purpose of inducing him to see them if they called. He refused. He was inflexible. Expostulation was useless. He turned out poor Pritchard, who had undertaken to plead their cause, with violence from his room. Whether he dreaded the effects of such an interview on the shattered nerves, the weakened frame of his mother and cousin, or feared that his own fortitude would be overpowered, or debarred himself of their sweet but sorrowful society by way of *penance*, I know not, but he returned an unwavering denial to every such application. I think the last-mentioned was the motive which actuated him; for I said to him, on one occasion, “Well, but, Beauchamp, suppose your mother should *die* before you



have seen her, and received her forgiveness?" He replied, sternly, "Well, I shall have *deserved* it." I could account for his feelings without referring them to sullenness or obstinacy. His heart bled at every pore under the unceasing lashings of remorse! On another occasion he said to me, "It would *kill* my mother to see me here. She shall never die in a prison!"

The day previous to his trial I called upon him, pursuant to my promise. The room was full of counsel and attorneys; and numerous papers were lying on the table, which a clerk was beginning to gather up into a bag when I entered. They had been holding their final consultation; and left their client more disturbed than I had seen him for some days. The eminent counsel who had been retained spoke by no means encouragingly of the expected issue of the trial, and reiterated the determination to "do the very uttermost on his behalf." They repeated, also, that the prosecutor was following him up like a bloodhound; that he had got scent of some evidence against Beauchamp in particular, which would *tell* terribly against him—and make out a case of "malice prepense." And, as if matters had not been already sufficiently gloomy, the attorney had learned, only that afternoon, that the case was to be tried by one of the judges who, it was rumoured, was resolved to make an example of the first duellist he could convict!

"I shall undoubtedly be sacrificed, as my *fortune* has already," said Beauchamp, with a little trepidation. "Every thing seems against me. If I *should* be condemned to death, what is to become of my mother and Ellen?"

"I feel assured of your acquittal, Mr. Beauchamp," said I, not knowing exactly *why*, if he had asked me.

"I am a little given to superstition, doctor," he replied, "and I feel a persuasion—an innate conviction, that the grand finishing stroke has yet to descend; my misery awaits its climax."

"Why, what can you mean, my dear sir? Nothing new has been elicited."

"Doctor," he replied, gloomily, "I'll tell you something. I feel I ought to die!"

"Why, Mr. Beauchamp?" I inquired, with surprise.

"Ought not he to die who is *at heart* a murderer?" he inquired.

"Assuredly."

"Then I am such a one. I *meant* to kill Apsley. I prayed to God that I might. I would have shot breast to breast, but I would have killed him, and rid the earth of such a ruffian," said Beauchamp, rising with much excitement from his chair, and walking hurriedly to and fro. I shuddered to hear him make such an avowal, and continued silent. I felt my colour change.

"Are you shocked, doctor?" he inquired, pausing abruptly, and looking me full in the face. "I repeat it," clenching his fist, "I would have perished eternally to gratify my revenge. So would you," he continued, "if you had suffered as I have." With the last words he elevated his voice to a high key, and his eye glanced on me like lightning, as he passed and repassed me.

"How can we expect the mercy we will not show?" I inquired mildly.

"Don't mistake me, doctor," he resumed, without answering my last question; "it is not death I dread, disturbed as I appear, but only the *mode* of it. Death I covet, as a relief from life, which has grown hateful; but, great Heaven, to be hung like a dog!"

"Think of hereafter!" I exclaimed.

"Pshaw! I'm past thoughts of that. Why did not God keep me from the snares into which I have fallen?"

At that moment came a letter from Sir Edward Streighton. When he recognised the superscription, he threw it down on the table, exclaiming, "There!

This is the first I have heard from this accomplished scoundrel since the day I killed Apsley." He opened it, a scowl of fury and contempt on his brow, and read the following flippant and unfeeling letter :—

"Dear Brother in the bonds of blood!

"My right trusty and well-beloved counsellor, and thine, Hillier, and thy unworthy E. S., intend duly to take our stand beside thee, at nine o'clock to-morrow morning, in the dock of the Old Bailey, as per recognisances. Be not thou cast down, O my soul; but throw thou fear unto the dogs! There's never a jury in England will convict us, even though, as I hear, that bloody-minded old — is to try us! We've got a good fellow (on reasonable terms, considering) to swear he happened to be present, and that we put you up at forty paces! And that he heard you tender an apology to Apsley! The sweet convenient rogue!!! What think you of that, dear Beau? Yours ever—but not on the gallows.

"EDW. STREIGHTON.

"P.S. I wish Apsley, by-the-way, poor devil! had paid me a trifling hundred or two he owed me before going home. But he went in a hurry, 'tis true. Catch me ever putting up another man before asking him if he has any debts unprovided for!"

"There, there, doctor!" exclaimed Beauchamp, flinging the letter on the floor, and stamping on it; "ought not I to go out of the world for allowing such a fellow as this to lead me the dance of ruin?"

I shook my head.

"Oh, did you but know the secret history of the last six months," he continued, bitterly, "the surpassing folly, the black ingratitude, the villanies of all kinds with which it was stained, you would blush to sit in the same room with me! Would not it be so?"

"Come, come, Mr. Beauchamp, you are raving!"

I replied, giving him my hand, while the tears half-blinded me, for he looked the picture of contrition and hopelessness.

"Well, then," he continued, eying me steadfastly, "I may do what I have often thought of. You have a kind, considerate heart, and I will trust you. By way of the heaviest penance I could think of—but, alas, how unavailing!—I have employed the last week in writing my short but wretched history. Read it—and curse, as you go on, my folly, my madness, my villany! I've often laid down my pen, and wept aloud, while writing it; and yet the confession has eased my heart. One thing, I think, you will see plainly—that all along I have been the victim of some deep diabolical conspiracy. Those two vile fellows who will stand beside me to-morrow in the dock, like evil spirits—and the monster I have killed—have been the main agents throughout. I'm sure something will, ere long, come to light, and show you I am speaking the truth. Return it me," he continued, taking a packet from his table drawer, sealed with black, "in the event of my acquittal, that I may burn it; but if I am to die, do what you will with it. Even if the world know of it, it cannot hurt me in the grave, and it may save some from *Hazard* and *Rouge et Noir*!—Horrible sounds!"

I received the packet in silence, promising him to act as he wished.

"How will my mother, how will Ellen get over to-morrow? Heaven have them in its holy keeping! My own heart quails at to-morrow! I must breathe a polluted atmosphere; I must stand on the precise spot which has been occupied by none but the vilest of my species; I shall have every eye in court fixed upon me—some with horror, others detestation—and some, *pity*, which is worse than either. I must stand between two that I can never look on as other than devils incarnate! My every gesture and motion, every turn of my face will be noted down and pub-

lished all over the kingdom, with severe, possibly insulting comments. Good God, how am I to bear it all?"

"Have you prepared your defence, Mr. Beauchamp?" I inquired. He pointed languidly to several sheets of foolscap, full of scorings out, and said, with a sigh, "I'm afraid it is labour lost. I can say little or nothing. I shall not *lie*, even for my life! I have yet to finish it."

"Don't, then, let me keep you from it! May God bless you, my dear sir, and send you an acquittal to-morrow! What shall I say to your mother—to Miss Beauchamp, if I see them to-night?"

His eyes glistened with tears, he trembled, shook his head, and whispered, "What can be said to them!"

I shook him fervently by the hand. As I was quitting the door, he beckoned me back.

"Doctor," he whispered, in a shuddering tone, "there is to be an *execution* to-morrow! Five men will be hanged within ten yards of me! I shall hear them, in the night, putting up the—gallows!"

The memorable morning, for such it was even to me, at length dawned. The whole day was rainy, cold, and foggy, as if the elements, even, had combined to depress hearts already prostrate! After swallowing a hasty breakfast, I set off for the Old Bailey, calling, for a few minutes, on Mrs. Beauchamp, as I had promised her. Poor old lady! She had not slept half an hour during the whole night and when I entered the room she was lying in bed, with her hands clasped together, and her eyes closed, listening to one of the church prayers, which her niece was reading her. I sat down in silence; and when the low, tremulous voice of Miss Beauchamp had ceased, I shook her cold hand, and took my seat by her aunt. I pushed the curtain aside that I might see her distinctly. Her features looked ghastly. What savage work grief had wrought there!

"I don't think I shall live through this dreadful day," said she, "I feel every thing dissolving within me! I am deadly sick every moment; my heart flutters as if it were in expiring agonies; and my limbs have little in them more than a corpse! Ellen, too, my sweet love! *she* is as bad, and yet she conquers it, and attends me like an angel!"

"Be of good heart, my dear madam," said I; "matters are by no means desperate. This evening, I'll take my life for it, you shall have your son in your arms!"

"Ha!" quivered the old lady, clapping her hands, while a faint hysteric laugh broke from her colourless lips.

"Well, I must leave you, for I am going to hear the opening of the trial; I promised your son as much last night."

"How was he?" faintly inquired Miss Beauchamp, who was sitting beside the fire, her face buried in her hands, and her elbows resting on her knees. The anguished eyes of her aunt also asked me the question, though her lips spoke not. I assured them that he was not in worse spirits than I had seen him, and that I left him preparing his defence.

"The Lord God of his fathers bless him, and deliver him!" moaned Mrs. Beauchamp. As, however, time passed, and I wished to look in on one or two patients in my way, I began to think of leaving, though I scarce knew how. I enjoined them to keep constantly by Mrs. Beauchamp a glass of brandy and water, with half a teaspoonful of laudanum in it, that she or her niece might drink it whenever they felt a sudden faintness come over them. For further security, I had also stationed for the day in her bedroom a young medical friend, who might pay her constant attention. Arrangements had been made, I found, with the attorney to report the progress of the trial every hour by four regular runners.

Shaking both the ladies affectionately by the hand,  
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I set off. After seeing the patients I spoke of, I hurried on to the Old Bailey. It was striking ten by St. Sepulchre's clock when I reached that gloomy street. The rain was pouring down in drenching showers. I passed by the gallows, which they were taking down, and on which five men had been executed only two hours before. Horrid sight! the whole of the street along the sessions' house was covered with straw, thoroughly soaked with wet; and my carriage wheels rolled along it noiselessly. I felt my colour leaving me, and my heart beating fast, as I descended, and entered the area before the courthouse, which was occupied with many anxious groups conversing together, heedless of the rain, and endeavouring to get admittance into the court. The street-entrance was crowded; and it was such a silent, gloomy crowd as I never before saw! I found the trial had commenced; so I made my way instantly to the counsel's benches. The court was crowded to suffocation; and among the spectators I recognised several of the nobility. Three prisoners stood in the dock, all of gentlemanly appearance; and the strong startled light thrown on them from the mirror overhead gave their anxious faces a ghastly hue. How vividly is that group, even at this distance of time, before my eyes! On the right-hand side stood Sir Edward Streighton, dressed in military style, with a black stock, and his blue frock-coat, with velvet collar, buttoned up close to his neck. Both his hands rested on his walking-stick; and his head, bent a little aside, was attentively directed towards the counsel for the crown, who was stating the case to the jury. Hillier leaned against the left-hand side of the dock, his arms folded over his breast, and his stern features, clouded with anxiety, but evincing no agitation, were gathered into a frown, as he listened to the strong terms in which his conduct was being described by the counsel. Between these stood poor Beauchamp,

with fixed and most sorrowful countenance. He was dressed in black, with a full black stock, in the centre of which glistened a dazzling speck of diamond. Both his hands leaned upon the dock, on which stood a glass of spring water; and his face was turned full towards the judge. There was an air of melancholy composure and resignation about his wasted features; and he looked dreadfully thin and fallen away. His appearance evidently excited deep and respectful sympathy. How my heart ached to look at him, when my thoughts reverted for an instant to his mother and cousin! There was, however, one other object of the gloomy picture which arrested my attention, and has remained with me ever since. Just beneath the witness-box there was a savage face fixed upon the counsel, gloating upon his exaggerated violence of tone and manner. It was Mr. Frederick Apsley, the relentless prosecutor. I never saw such an impersonation of malignity. On his knees lay his fists, clenched, and quivering with irrepressible fury; and the glances he occasionally cast towards the prisoners were absolutely fiendish.

The counsel for the prosecution distorted and aggravated every occurrence on the fatal night of the quarrel. Hillier and Apsley, as he went on, exchanged confounded looks, and muttered between their teeth; but Beauchamp seemed unmoved, even when the counsel seriously asserted he should be in a condition to prove that Beauchamp came to the house of the deceased with the avowed intention of provoking him into a duel; that he had been attempting foul play throughout the evening; and that the cause of his inveteracy against the deceased was the deceased's having won considerably.

"Did this quarrel originate, then, in a gaming-house?" inquired the judge, sternly.

"Why—yes, my lord—it did, undoubtedly."

"Pray, are the parties *professed* gamblers?"



The counsel hesitated. "I do not exactly know what your lordship means by *professed* gamblers, my lord."

"Oh!" exclaimed the judge, significantly, "go on—go on, sir." I felt shocked at the virulence manifested by the counsel; and I could not help suspecting him of uttering the grossest falsehoods, when I saw all three of the prisoners involuntarily turn towards one another, and lift up their hands with amazement. As his address seemed likely to continue much longer, profound as was the interest I felt in the proceedings, I was compelled to leave. I stood up for that purpose, and to take a last look at Beauchamp—when his eye suddenly fell upon me. He started—his lips moved—he looked at me anxiously—gave me a hurried bow, and resumed the attentive attitude in which he had been standing.

I hurried away to see my patients, several of whom were in most critical circumstances. Having gone through most on my list, and being in the neighbourhood, I stepped in to see how Mrs. Beauchamp was going on. When I entered her bedroom, after gently tapping at the door, I heard a hurried feeble voice exclaim, "There! there! who is that?" It was Mrs. Beauchamp, who endeavoured, but in vain, to raise herself up in bed, while her eyes stared at me with an expression of wild alarm, which abated a little on seeing who I was. She had mistaken me, I found, for the hourly messenger. I sat down beside her. Several of her female relatives were in the room—a pallid group—having arrived soon after I had left.

"Well, my dear madam, and how are you now?" I inquired, taking the aged sufferer's hand in mine.

"I may be better, doctor—but cannot be worse. Nature tells me the hour is come!"

"I am happy to see you so well, so affectionately attended in these trying circumstances," said I, looking around the room. She made me no reply, but

moaned, "Oh! Henry, Henry, Henry! I would to God you had never been born! Why are you thus breaking the heart that always loved you so fondly!" She shook her head, and the tears trembled through her closed eyelids. Miss Beauchamp, dressed in black, sat at the foot of the bed, speechless, her head leaning against the bedpost, and her pale face directed towards her aunt.

"How are *you*, my dear Miss Beauchamp?" inquired I. She made me no answer, but continued looking at her aunt.

"My sweet love!" said her mother, drawing her chair to her, and proffering her a little wine and water, "Doctor — is speaking to you. He asks you how you are!" Miss Beauchamp looked at me, and pressed her white hand upon her heart, without speaking. Her mother looked at me significantly, as if she begged I would not ask her daughter any more questions, for it was evident she could not bear them. I saw several slips of paper lying on a vacant chair beside the bed. They were the hourly billets from the Old Bailey. One of them was, "12 o'clock, O. B. Not quite so encouraging. Our counsel can't make much impression in examination. Judge seems rather turning against prisoner."

"1 o'clock, O. B. Nothing particular since last note. Prisoner very calm and firm."

"2 o'clock, O. B. Still going on as in last."

"3 o'clock, O. B. Mr. Beauchamp just read his defence. Made favourable impression on the court. Many in tears. Acknowledged himself ruined by play. General impression, prisoner victim of conspiracy."

Such were the hourly annunciations of the progress of the trial, forwarded by the attorneys, in whose handwriting each of them was. The palsy-ing suspense in which the intervals between the receipt of each was passed, and the trepidation with which they were opened and read, no one daring

scarce to touch them but Mr. M——, the medical attendant, cannot be described. Mr. M—— informed me that Mrs. Beauchamp had been wandering deliriously, more or less, all day, and that the slightest noise in the street, like hurrying footsteps, spread dismay through the room, and nearly drove the two principal sufferers frantic. Miss Beauchamp, I found, had been twice in terrible hysterics, but, with marvellous self-possession, calmly left the room when she felt them coming on, and retired to the farthest part of the house. While Mr. M—— and I were conversing in a low whisper near the fireplace, a heavy but muffled knock at the street-door announced the arrival of another express from the Old Bailey. Mrs. Beauchamp trembled violently, and the very bed quivered under her, as she saw the billet delivered into my hands. I opened it, and read aloud,—

“4 o'clock, O. B. Judge summing up. Sorry to say, a little unfavourable to prisoner. Don't *think*, however, prisoner will be *capitally* convicted.” Within this slip was another, which was from Beauchamp himself, and addressed,—

“Sweet loves! Courage! The crisis approaches. I am not in despair. God is merciful! May he bless you for ever and ever, my mother, my Ellen! —H. B.”

The gloomy tenor of the last billet—for we could not conceal them from either, as they insisted on *seeing* them after we had read them—excited Mrs. and Miss Beauchamp almost to phrensy. It was heart-rending to see them both shaking in every muscle, and uttering the most piteous moans. I resolved not to quit them till the event was known one way or another, and dismissed Mr. M——, begging him to return home with the carriage, and inform my wife that I should not dine at home. I then begged that some refreshment might be brought in, ostensibly for my dinner, but really to give me

an opportunity of forcing a little nourishment on my patients. My meal, however, was scanty and solitary; for I could scarcely eat myself, and could not induce any one else to touch food.

"This must be a day of *fasting*!" sighed Mrs. Beauchamp; and I desisted from the attempt.

"Mrs. Beauchamp," inquired her sister-in-law, "would you like to hear a chapter in the Bible read to you?"

"Y—ye—yes!" she replied, eagerly. "Let it be the parable of the *prodigal son*; and perhaps Doctor — will read it to us?"

What an affecting selection! Thinking it might serve to occupy their minds for a short time, I commenced reading it, but not very steadily or firmly. The relieving tears gushed forth freely from Mrs. Beauchamp, and every one in the room, as I went on with that most touching, beautiful, and appropriate parable. When I had concluded, and amid a pause of silent expectation, another billet was brought.

"5 o'clock, O. B. Judge still summing up with great pains. Symptoms of leaning towards the prisoner."

Another agitating hour elapsed—how I scarcely know; and a breathless messenger brought a sixth billet:—

"6 o'clock, O. B. Jury retired to consider verdict—been absent half an hour. Rumoured in court that two hold out against the rest—not known on which side."

After the reading of this torturing note, which Mrs. Beauchamp did not ask to see, she lifted up her shaking hands to heaven, and seemed lost in an agony of prayer. After a few minutes spent in this way, she gasped, almost inaudibly, "Oh! doctor, read once more the parable you have read, beginning at the twentieth verse." I took the Bible in my hands, and tremulously read,—

"And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion" (a short, bitter, hysteric laugh broke from Mrs. Beauchamp), "and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

\* \* \* "And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat and be merry :

"For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found: and they began"—

The death-like silence in which my trembling voice was listened to was broken by the sound of a slight bustle in the street beneath, and the noise of some approaching vehicle. We scarce breathed. The sound increased. Miss Beauchamp slowly dropped on her knees beside the bed, and buried her ashy face in the clothes. The noise outside increased; voices were heard; and at length a short faint "huzza !" was audible.

"There !—I told you so ! He is free !—My son is ACQUITTED !" exclaimed Mrs. Beauchamp, sitting in an instant upright in bed, stretching her arms upon it, and clapping her hands in ecstasy. Her features were lit up with a glorious smile. She pushed back her dishevelled gray hair, and sat straining her eye and ear, and stretching forward her hands as if to enjoin silence.

Then was heard the sound of footsteps rapidly ascending the stairs ; the door was knocked at ; and before I could reach it for the purpose of preventing any sudden surprise, in rushed the old steward, frantic with joy, waving his hat over his head.

"NOT GUILTY !—NOT GUILTY !—NOT GUILTY, my lady !" he gasped, all in a breath, in defiance of my cautioning movements. "He's coming ! He's coming ! He's coming, my lady !" Miss Beauchamp sunk in an instant on the floor, with a faint scream, and was carried out of the room in a swoon.

Mrs. Beauchamp again clapped her hands. Her son rushed into the room, flung himself at her feet,

and threw his arms around her. For several moments he locked her in his embraces, kissing her with convulsive fondness. "My mother! My own mother! Your son!" he gasped; but she heard him not. She had expired in his arms.

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To proceed with my narrative, after recounting such a lamentable catastrophe, is like conducting a spectator to the death-strewn plain after the day of battle! All in the once happy family of Beauchamp was thenceforth sorrow, sickness, broken-heartedness, and death. As for the unhappy Beauchamp, he was released from the horrors of a prison only to "turn his pale face to the wall," on a lingering, languishing, bed of sickness which he could not quit, even to follow the poor remains of his mother to their final resting-place in —shire. He was not only confined to his bed, but wholly unconscious of the time of the burial; for a fierce nervous fever kept him in a state of continual delirium. Another physician and myself were in constant attendance on him. Poor Miss Beauchamp also was ill; and, if possible, in a worse plight than her cousin. The reader cannot be surprised that such long and intense sufferings should have shattered her vital energies—should have sown the seeds of *consumption* in her constitution. Her pale, emaciated, shadowy figure is now before me! After continuing under my care for several weeks, her mother carried her home into —shire, in a most precarious state, hoping the usual beneficial results expected from a return to native air. Poor girl! She gave me a little pearl ring, as a keepsake, the day she went; and intrusted to me a rich diamond ring, to give to her cousin Henry; "It is too large now for *my* fingers," said she, with a sigh, as she dropped it into my hand from her wasted finger! "Tell him," said she, "as soon as you consider it safe, that my love is his—my whole heart! And though we may never meet on this side the grave,

let him wear it to *think* of me, and hope for happiness hereafter!" These were among the last words that sweet young woman ever spoke to me.

\* \* \* \* \*

As the reader possibly may think he has been long enough detained among these sorrowful scenes, I shall draw them now to a close, and omit much of what I had set down for publication.

Mr. Beauchamp did not once rise from his bed during two months, the greater part of which time was passed in a state of stupor. At other periods he was delirious, and raved dreadfully about scenes with which the manuscript he committed to me in prison had made me long and painfully familiar. He loaded himself with the heaviest curses, for the misery he had occasioned to his mother and Ellen. He had taken it into his head that the latter was also dead, and that he had attended her funeral. He was not convinced to the contrary till I judged it safe to allow him to open a letter she addressed to him under cover to me. She told him she thought she was "getting strong again;" and that if he would still accept her heart and hand, in the event of his recovery, they were his unchangeably. Nothing contributed so much to Beauchamp's recovery as this letter. With what fond transports did he receive the ring Ellen had intrusted to my keeping!

His old steward, Pritchard, after accompanying his venerated lady's remains into the country, returned immediately to town, and scarce ever after left his master's bedside. His officious affection rendered the office of the valet a comparative sinecure. Many were the piques and heartburnings between these two zealous and emulous servants of an unfortunate master, on account of the one usurping the other's duty!

One of the earliest services that old Pritchard rendered his master, as soon as I warranted him in so doing, was to point out who had been the "serpent in

his path"—the origin—the deliberate, diabolical designer of his ruin—in the person of his tutor! The shock of this discovery rendered Beauchamp speechless for the remainder of the day. Strange and wise are the ways of Providence! How does the reader imagine the disgraceful disclosures were brought about? Sir Edward Streighton, who had got into his hands the title-deeds of one of the estates, out of which he and his scoundrel companions had swindled Beauchamp, had been hardy enough—*quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat*—to venture into a court of law, to prosecute his claim! In spite of threatened disclosures, he pressed on to trial; when such a series of flagrant iniquities was developed, unexpectedly to *all* parties, as compelled Sir Edward, who was in court *incognito*, to slip away, and without even venturing home, embark for the Continent, and from then e to America.\* His papers were all seized under a judge's order, by Mr. Beauchamp's agents; and among them was found the letter addressed to him by Eccles, coolly commending his unsuspecting pupil to destruction!

Under Beauchamp's order, his steward made a copy of the letter, and enclosed it, with the following lines, to the tutor, who had since contrived to gain a vicarage!

"To the Reverend Peter Eccles, vicar of —,

"SIR,—A letter, of which the following is a copy, has been discovered in your handwriting among the papers of Sir Edward Streighton, and the same post which brings you this encloses your own original

\* His companion in villany, who in this narrative is called *Hiltier*, brazened out the affair with unequalled effrontery, and continued in England till within the last very few years; when, rank with roguery, he tumbled into the grave, and so cheated justice. The hoary villain might be seen nightly at — street, with huge green glasses—*now* up to his knees in cards, and *then* endeavouring, with palsied hand, to shake the dice with which he had ruined so many!



letter to Sir Edward, with all necessary explanations, to the bishop of your diocess.

"The monstrous perfidy it discloses will be forthwith made as public as the journals of the day can make it.

"THOMAS PRITCHARD,  
Agent to Mr. Beauchamp."

What results attended the application to the bishop, and whether or not the concluding threat was carried into effect, *I have reasons for concealing*. There *are* who do not need information on those points.

The first time that I saw Mr. Beauchamp down stairs after his long, painful, and dangerous illness was in the evening of the July following. He was sitting in his easy-chair, which was drawn close to a bow-window, commanding an uninterrupted view of the setting sun. It was piteous to see how loosely his black clothes hung about him. If you touched any of his limbs, they felt like those of a skeleton clothed with the vestments of the living. His long thin fingers seemed attenuated and blanched to a more than feminine delicacy of size and hue. His face was shrunk and sallow, and his forehead bore the searings of a "scorching wo." His hair, naturally black as jet, was now of a sad iron-gray colour; and his eyes were sunk, but full of vivid, though melancholy expression. The air of noble frankness, spirit, and cheerfulness which had heretofore graced his countenance was fled for ever.

In short, to use the quaint expression of a sterling old English writer, "care had scratched out the comeliness of his visage." He appeared to have lost all interest in life, even though Ellen was alive, and they were engaged to be married within a few months! In his right hand was a copy of "Bacon's Essays;" and on the little finger of his left I observed the rich ring given him by his cousin. As he sat,

I thought him a fit subject for a painter! Old Pritchard, dressed also in plain mourning, sat at a table, busily engaged with account-books and piles of papers, and seemed to be consulting his master on the affairs of his estate when I entered.

"I hope, doctor, you'll excuse Mr. Pritchard continuing in the room with us. He's in the midst of important business," he continued, seeing the old man preparing to leave the room; "he is my *friend* now, as well as steward; and the oldest, I may say *only* friend I have left!" I entreated him not to mention the subject, and the faithful old steward bowed, and resumed his seat.

"Well," said Mr. Beauchamp, after answering the usual inquiries respecting his health, "I am not, after all, absolutely *ruined* in point of fortune. Pritchard has just been telling me that I have more than four hundred a-year left—"

"Sir, sir, you may as well call it a good 500*l.* a-year," said Pritchard, eagerly taking off his spectacles. "I am but 20*l.* a-year short of the mark, and I'll *manage that*, by hook or by crook,—and you see if I don't!" Beauchamp smiled faintly. "You see, doctor, Pritchard is determined to put the best face upon matters."

"Well, Mr. Beauchamp," I replied, "taking it even at the lower sum mentioned, I am sincerely rejoiced to find you so comfortably provided for." While I was speaking, the tears rose in his eyes—trembled there for a few moments—and then, spite of all his attempts to prevent them, overflowed.

"What distresses you?" I inquired, taking his slender fingers in mine. When he had a little recovered himself, he replied, with emotion, "Am I not comparatively a beggar? Does it suit to hear that Henry Beauchamp is a *beggar*! I have nothing now but misery—hopeless misery! Where shall I go, what shall I do, to find peace? Wherever I go, I shall

carry a broken heart, and a consciousness that I deserved it! I—I, the murderer of two—”

“Two, Mr. Beauchamp? What can you mean? The voice of justice has solemnly acquitted you of murdering the miserable Apsley—and who the other is—”

“My mother! my poor, fond, doting mother! I have killed *her*, as certainly as I slew the guilty wretch that ruined me! My ingratitude pierced her *heart*, as my bullet his *head*! That it is which distracts—which maddens me! The rest I might have borne—even the anguish I have occasioned my sweet, forgiving Ellen, and the profligate destruction of the fortunes of my house!” I saw he was in one of the frequent fits of despondency to which he was latterly subject, and thought it best not to interrupt the strain of his bitter retrospections. I therefore listened to his self-accusations in silence.

“Surely you have ground for comfort and consolation in the unalterable, the increasing attachment of your cousin?” said I, after a melancholy pause.

“Ah, my God! it is that which drives the nail deeper! I cannot, cannot bear it! How shall I DARE to wed her? To bring her to an impoverished house—the house of a *ruined gamester*—when she has a right to rule in the halls of my fathers? To hold out to her the arms of a MURDERER!” He ceased abruptly—trembled; clasped his hands together, and seemed lost in a painful revery.

“God has, after all, intermingled some sweets in the cup of sorrows you have drained: why cast *them* scornfully away, and dwell on the taste of the bitter?”

“Because my head is disordered; my appetites are corrupted. I cannot now *taste* happiness. I know it not; the relish is gone forever!”

\* \* \* \* \*

“In what part of the country do you propose residing?” I inquired.

"I can never be received in English society again, and I will not remain here in a perpetual pillory to be pointed at! I shall quit England for ever—"

"You *sha'n't*, though!" exclaimed the steward, bursting into tears, and rising from his chair, no longer able to control himself, "You *sha'n't* go," he continued, walking hurriedly to and fro, snapping his fingers. You *sha'n't*—no, you *sha'n't*, Master Beauchamp—though I say it that should'n't! You shall trample on my old bones first."

"Come, come, kind old man! Give me your hand!" exclaimed Mr. Beauchamp, affected by this lively show of feeling on the part of his old and tried servant. "Come, I won't go, then—I won't!"

"Ah!—point at you—*point at you*, did you say, sir! I'll be —— if I won't do for any one that points at you what you did for that rogue Aps—"

"Hush, Pritchard!" said his master, rising from his chair, and looking shudderingly at him.

The sun was fast withdrawing, and a portion of its huge blood-red disk was already dipped beneath the horizon. Is there a more touching or awful object in nature? We who were gazing at it felt that there was not. All before us was calmness and repose. Beauchamp's kindling eye assured me that his soul sympathized with the scene.

"Doctor—doctor," he exclaimed suddenly, "what has come to me? Is there a devil mocking me? Or is it an angel whispering that I shall yet be happy? May I listen—*may* I listen to it?" He paused. His excitement increased. "O yes, yes! I feel intimately—I know I am reserved for happier days! God smileth on me, and my soul is once more warmed and enlightened!" An air of joy diffused itself over his features. I never before saw the gulf between despair and hope passed with such lightning speed! Was it returning delirium only?

"How can he enjoy happiness who has never tasted misery?" he continued, uninterrupted by me.

"And may not he most relish peace who has been longest tossed in trouble! Why—why have I been desponding? Sweet, precious Ellen! I will write to you! We shall soon meet; we shall even be happy together! Pritchard," he exclaimed, turning abruptly to the listening steward, "what say you?—Will you be my *major-domo*,—eh? Will you be with us in the country once again?"

"Ay, Master Beauchamp," replied Pritchard, crying like a child, "as long as these old eyes, and hands, and head can serve you, they are yours! I'll be any thing you'd like to make me!"

"There's a bargain, then, between you and me! You see, doctor, Ellen will not cast me off; and old Pritchard will cling to me: why should I throw away happiness?"

"Certainly, certainly! There is much happiness before you—"

"The thought is transporting, that I shall soon leave the scenes of guilt and dissipation for ever, and breathe the fresh and balmy atmosphere of virtue once again! How I long for the time! Mother, will you watch over your prodigal son?" How little he thought of the affecting recollections he had called forth in my mind by mentioning—the *prodigal son*!

I left him about nine o'clock, recommending him to retire to rest, and not expose himself to the cool of the evening. I felt excited myself by the tone of our conversation, which, I suspected, however, had on his part verged far into occasional flightiness. I had not such sanguine hopes for him as he entertained for himself. I suspected that his constitution, however it might rally for a time from its present prostration, had received a shock before which it *must* ere long fall!

About five o'clock the next morning I and all my family were alarmed by one of the most violent and continued ringings and thunderings at the door I

ever heard. On looking out of my bedroom window, I saw Mr. Beauchamp's valet below, wringing his hands and stamping about the steps like one distracted.

Full of fearful apprehension, I dressed myself in an instant, and came down stairs.

"In the name of God, what is the matter?" I inquired, seeing him pale as ashes.

"Oh, my master! come—come," he could get out no more. We both ran at a top speed to Mr. Beauchamp's lodgings. Even at that early hour there was an agitated group before the door. I rushed up stairs, and soon learned all. About a quarter of an hour before, the family were disturbed by hearing Mr. Beauchamp's Newfoundland dog, which always slept at his master's bedroom door, howling, whining, and scratching against it. The valet and some one else came to see what was the matter. They found the dog trembling violently, his eyes fixed on the floor; and on looking down, they saw blood flowing from under the door. The valet threw himself half-frantic against the door, and burst it open; he rushed in, and saw all! Poor Beauchamp, with a razor grasped in his right hand, was lying on the floor lifeless!

I never now hear of a young man, especially of fortune, frequenting the GAMING TABLE, but I think with a sigh of Henry Beauchamp.

#### A WORD WITH THE READER, AT PARTING.

These PASSAGES are at length brought to a close; and it may be thought high time they were. In bidding farewell to his readers the Editor of the foregoing series of papers begs to assure those who have read them, that if in any instance their *hearts* have

been interested, and touched by the MORAL always aimed at, the pains and trouble with which these sketches have been prepared for publication will have been nobly bestowed.

He begs, in conclusion, to express his acknowledgments for the handsome terms in which this Diary has been from time to time characterized by some of the leading journals and newspapers.

*London, 15th Sept, 1831.*

## CHAPTER V.

## THE THUNDER-STRUCK.

In the summer of 18—, London was visited by one of the most tremendous thunder-storms that have been known in this climate. Its character and effects, some of which latter form the subject of this chapter, will make me remember it to the latest hour of my life.

There was something portentous — a still surcharged air,—about the whole of Tuesday the 10th of July, 18—, as though nature were trembling and cowering beneath the coming shock. To use the exquisite language of one of our old dramatists (Marlow), there seemed

———“A calm  
Before a tempest, when the gentle air  
Lays her soft ear close to the earth, to listen  
For that she fears steals on to ravish her.”

From about 11 o'clock at noon, the sky wore a lurid threatening aspect that shot awe into the beholder; suggesting to startled fancy the notion that within the dim confines of the “labouring air” mischief was working to the world.

The heat was intolerable, keeping almost everybody within doors. The very dogs, and cattle in the streets, stood everywhere panting and loath to move. There was a prodigious excitement, or rather agitation, diffused throughout the country, especially London; for, strange to say (and thousands will recollect the circumstance), it had been for some time confidently foretold by certain enthusiasts, religious as well as philosophic, that the earth was to be destroyed that very day; in short, that the awful JUDGMENT was at hand! Though not myself over credu-



lous, or given to superstitious fears, I own that on coupling these fearful predictions with the unusual, or rather unnatural aspect of the day, I more than once experienced sudden qualms of apprehension as I rode along on my daily rounds. I did not so much communicate alarm to the various circles I entered, as catch it from them. Then, again, I would occasionally pass a silent group of passengers clustering round a street preacher, who, true to his vocation, "redeeming the time," seemed by his gestures, and the disturbed countenances around him, to be foretelling all that was frightful. The tone of excitement which pervaded my feelings was further heightened by a conversation on the prevailing topic which I had in the course of the morning with the distinguished poet and scholar Mr. —. With what fearful force did he suggest probabilities; what vivid, startling colouring did he throw over them! It was, indeed, a topic congenial to his gloomy imagination. He talked to me, in short, till my disturbed fancy realized the wildest chimeras.

"Great God, Dr. —!" said he, laying his hand suddenly on my arm, his great black eyes gleaming with mysterious awe, "think, only think! What if, at the moment, we are talking together, a comet, whose track the peering eye of science has never traced—whose very existence is known to none but God, is winging its fiery way towards our earth, swift as the lightning, and with force inevitable! Is it at this instant dashing to fragments some mighty orb that obstructed its progress, and then passing on towards us, disturbing system after system in its way? How—when will the frightful crash be felt? Is its heat now blighting our atmosphere? Will combustion first commence, or shall we be at once split asunder into innumerable fragments, and sent drifting through infinite space? Whither—whither shall we fly! What must become of our species? Is the Scriptural JUDGMENT then coming? Oh, doctor, what if all these things are really at hand!"

Was this imaginative raving calculated to calm one's feelings! By the time I reached home, late in the afternoon, I felt in a fever of excitement. I found an air of apprehension throughout the whole house. My wife, children, and a young visiter, who were all together in the parlour, looking out for me, through the window, anxiously, and with paler faces than they might choose to own. The visiter just alluded to, by-the-way, was a Miss Agnes P——, a girl of about twenty-one, the daughter of an old friend and patient of mine. Her mother, a widow (with no other child than this), resided in a village about fifty miles from town, from which she was expected in a few days' time, to take her daughter back again into the country. Miss P—— was without exception the most charming young woman I think I ever met with. The beauty of her person but faintly shadowed forth the loveliness of her mind and the amiability of her character. There was a rich languor, or rather softness of expression, about her features that to me is enchanting, and constitutes the highest and rarest style of feminine loveliness. Her dark, pensive, searching eyes spoke a soul full of feeling and fancy. If you, reader, had but *felt* their gaze, had seen them, now glistening in liquid radiance upon you, from beneath their long dark lashes, and then sparkling with enthusiasm, while the flush of excitement was on her beautiful features, and her white hands hastily folded back her auburn tresses from her alabaster brow, your heart would have thrilled as mine often has, and you would with me have exclaimed, in a sort of ecstasy, "Star of your sex!" The tones of her voice, so mellow and various, and her whole carriage and demeanour, were in accordance with the expression of her features. In person she was a little under the average height, but most exquisitely moulded and proportioned; and there was a Hebe-like ease and grace about all her features. She excelled in almost all feminine accomplishments; but the "things wherein her soul delighted" were music and romance. A

more imaginative, etherealized creature was surely never known. It required all the fond and anxious surveillance of her friends to prevent her carrying her tastes to excess, and becoming, in a manner, unfitted for the "dull commerce of dull earth!" No sooner had this fair being made her appearance in my house, and given token of something like a prolonged stay, than I became the most popular man in the circle of my acquaintance. Such assiduous calls to inquire after *my* health, and that of my family! Such a multitude of men—young ones to boot—and so embarrassed with a consciousness of the poorness of the pretence that drew them to my house! Such matronly inquiries from mothers and elderly female relatives, into the nature and extent of "sweet Miss P——'s expectations!" During a former stay at my house, about six months before the period of which I am writing, Miss P—— surrendered her affections (to the delighted surprise of all her friends and relatives) to the quietest and perhaps worthiest of her claimants—a young man then preparing for orders at Oxford. Never, sure, was there a greater contrast between the tastes of a pledged couple: she all feeling, romance, enthusiasm; he serene, thoughtful, and matter-of-fact. It was most amusing to witness their occasional collisions on subjects which brought into play their respective tastes and qualities; and interesting to note that the effect was invariably to raise the one in the other's estimation, as if they mutually prized most the qualities of the other. Young N—— had spent two days in London, the greater portion of them, I need hardly say, at my house, about a week before; and he and his fair mistress had disputed rather keenly on the topic of general discussion—the predicted event of the 10th of July. If she did not repose implicit faith in the prophecy, her belief had, somehow or other, acquired a most disturbing strength. He laboured hard to disabuse her of her awful apprehensions, and she as hard to overcome his obstinate incredulity. Each

was a little too eager about the matter : and for the first time since they had known each other, they parted with a *little* coldness—yes, although he was to set off the next morning for Oxford ! In short, scarcely any thing was talked of by Agnes but the coming 10th of July ; and if she did not anticipate the actual destruction of the globe, and the final judgment of mankind, she at least looked forward to some event mysterious and tremendous. The eloquent enthusiastic creature almost brought over my placid wife to her way of thinking.

To return from this long digression, which, however, will be presently found to have been not unnecessary : After staying a few minutes in the parlour, I retired to my library, for the purpose, among other things, of making those entries in my Diary from which these “ Passages ” are taken ; but the pen lay useless in my hand. With my chin resting on the palm of my left hand, I sat at my desk lost in a reverie ; my eyes fixed on the tree which grew in the yard and overshadowed my windows. How still, how motionless was every leaf ! What sultry, oppressive, unnatural repose ! How it would have cheered me to hear the faintest “ sough ” of wind, to see the breeze sweep freshening through the leaves, rustling and stirring them into life ! I opened my window, untied my neckerchief, and loosened my shirt-collar, for I felt suffocated with the heat. I heard at length a faint pattering sound among the leaves of the tree, and presently there fell on the window-frame three or four large ominous drops of rain. After gazing upwards for a moment or two on the gloomy aspect of the sky, I once more settled down to writing ; and was dipping my pen into the inkstand, when there blazed about me a flash of lightning, with such a ghastly, blinding splendour, as defies all description. It was like what one might conceive to be a glimpse of hell ; and yet not a *glimpse* merely, for it continued, I think, six or seven seconds. It was followed at scarce an instant’s in-

terval with a crash of thunder as if the world had been smitten out of its sphere and was rending asunder! I hope these expressions will not be considered hyperbolic. No one, I am sure, who recollects the occurrence I am describing will require the appeal! May I never see or hear the like again! The sudden shock almost drove me out of my senses. I leaped from my chair with consternation; and could think of nothing, at the moment, but closing my eyes, and shutting out from my ears the stunning sound of the thunder. For a moment I stood literally stupefied. On recovering myself, my first impulse was to spring to the door, and rush down stairs in search of my wife and children. I heard, on my way, the sound of shrieking proceed from the parlour in which I had left them. In a moment I had my wife folded in my arms, and my children clinging with screams round my knees. My wife had fainted. While I was endeavouring to restore her, there came a second flash of lightning, equally terrible with the first, and a second explosion of thunder, loud as one could imagine the discharge of a thousand parks of artillery directly overhead. The windows, in fact the whole house, quivered with the shock. The noise helped to recover my wife from her swoon.

"Kneel down, love! husband!" she gasped, endeavouring to drop upon her knees; "kneel down! Pray, pray for us! We are undone!" After shouting till I was hoarse, and pulling the bell repeatedly and violently, one of the servants made her appearance, but in a state not far removed from that of her mistress. Both of them, however, recovered themselves in a few minutes, roused by the cries of the children. "Wait a moment, love," said I, "and I will fetch you a few reviving drops." I stepped into the back room, where I generally kept some phials of drugs, and poured out a few drops of sal volatile. The thought then for the first time struck me that Miss P—— was not in the parlour I had just quitted. *Where was she? What would she say to all this?*

God bless me, where is she ? I thought, with increasing trepidation.

"Edward, Edward," I exclaimed to a servant who happened to pass the door of the room where I was standing, "where is Miss P——?"

"Miss P——, sir ! why, I don't—Oh, yes !" he replied, suddenly recollecting himself, "about five minutes ago I saw her run very swift up stairs, and hav'ent seen her since, sir."—"What !" I exclaimed, with increasing trepidation, "was it about the time that the first flash of lightning came?"—"Yes, it was, sir!"—"Take this in to your mistress, and say I will be with her immediately," said I, giving him what I had mixed. I rushed up stairs, calling out as I went, "Agnes ! Agnes ! where are you ?" I received no answer. At length I reached the floor where her bed-room lay. The door was closed, but not shut.

"Agnes ! where are you ?" I inquired very agitatedly, at the same time knocking at her door. I received no answer.

"Agnes ! Agnes ! For God's sake speak ! Speak, or I shall come into your room !" No reply was made, and I thrust open the door. Heavens ! can I describe what I saw !

Within less than a yard of me stood the most frightful figure my eyes have ever beheld. It was Agnes ! She was in the attitude of stepping to the door, with both arms extended as if in a menacing mood. Her hair was partially dishevelled. Her face seemed whiter than the white dress she wore. Her lips were of a livid hue. Her eyes, full of awful expression, of supernatural lustre, were fixed with a petrifying stare on me. Oh, language fails me, utterly ! Those eyes have never since been absent from me when alone ! I felt as though they were blighting the life within me. I could not breathe, much less stir. I strove to speak, but could not utter a sound. My lips seemed rigid as those I

looked at. The horrors of nightmare were upon me. My eyes at length closed, my head seemed turning round, and for a moment or two I lost all consciousness. I revived. *There* was the frightful thing still before me—nay, close to me! Though I looked at her, I never once thought of Agnes P—. It was the tremendous appearance, the ineffable terror gleaming from her eyes that thus overcame me. I protest I cannot conceive any thing more dreadful! Miss P— continued standing perfectly motionless; and while I was gazing at her in the manner I have been describing, a peal of thunder roused me to my self-possession. I stepped towards her, took hold of her hand, exclaiming, “Agnes, Agnes!” and carried her to the bed, where I laid her down. It required some little force to press down her arms; and I drew the eyelids over her staring eyes mechanically. While in the act of doing so, a flash of lightning flickered luridly over her, but her eye neither quivered nor blinked. She seemed to have been suddenly deprived of all sense and motion; in fact, nothing but her pulse, if pulse it should be called, and faint breathing, showed that she lived. My eye wandered over her whole figure, dreading to meet some scorching trace of lightning, but there was nothing of the kind. What had happened to her? Was she frightened—to death? I spoke to her; I called her by her name, loudly; I shook her, rather violently: I might have acted it all to a statue! I rang the chamber-bell with almost frantic violence; and presently my wife and a female servant made their appearance in the room; but I was far more embarrassed than assisted by their presence. “Is she killed?” murmured the former, as she staggered towards the bed, and then clung convulsively to me. “Has the lightning struck her?”

I was compelled to disengage myself from her grasp, and hurry her into the adjoining room, whither I called a servant to attend to her, and then returned

to my hapless patient. But what was I to do? Medical man as I was, I never had seen a patient in such circumstances, and felt as ignorant on the subject as agitated. It was not epilepsy—it was not apoplexy—a swoon—nor any known species of hysteria. The most remarkable feature of her case, and what enabled me to ascertain the nature of her disease, was this: that if I happened accidentally to alter the position of her limbs, *they retained, for a short time, their new position.* If, for instance, I moved her arm, it remained for a while in the situation in which I had last placed it, and gradually resumed its former one. If I raised her into an upright posture, she continued sitting so without the support of pillows, or other assistance, as exactly as if she had heard me express a wish to that effect, and assented to it;—but the horrid vacancy of her aspect! If I elevated one eyelid for a moment to examine the state of the eye, it was some time in closing, unless I drew it over myself. All these circumstances, which terrified the servant who stood shaking at my elbow, and muttering, “She’s possessed! she’s possessed! Satan has her!” convinced me that the unfortunate young lady was seized with CATALEPSY; that rare mysterious affection, so fearfully blending the conditions of life and death—presenting, so to speak, life in the aspect of death, and death in that of life! I felt no doubt that extreme terror, operating suddenly on a nervous system most highly excited, and a vivid, active fancy, had produced the effects I saw. Doubtless the first terrible outbreak of the thunder-storm, especially the fierce splendour of that first flash of lightning which so alarmed myself, apparently corroborating and realizing all her awful apprehensions of the predicted event, overpowered her at once, and flung her into the fearful situation in which I found her—that of one ARRESTED in her terror-struck flight towards the door of her chamber. But again: the thought struck me, Had



she received any direct injury from the lightning? Had it blinded her? It might be so; for I could make no impression on the pupils of her eyes. Nothing could startle them into action. They seemed a little more dilated than usual, and fixed.

I confess that, besides the other agitating circumstances of the moment, this extraordinary, this unprecedented case, too much distracted my self-possession to enable me promptly to deal with it. I had heard and read of, but never before seen, such a case. No time, however, was to be lost. I determined to resort at once to strong antispasmodic treatment. I bled her from the arm freely, applied blisters behind the ears, immersed her feet, which, together with her hands, were cold as marble, in hot water, and endeavoured to force into her mouth a little opium and ether. While the servants were busied about her, undressing her, and carrying my directions into effect, I stepped for a moment into the adjoining room, where I found my wife just recovering from a violent fit of hysterics. Her loud laughter, though so near me, I had not once heard, so absorbed was I with the mournful case of Miss P——. After continuing with her till she recovered sufficiently to accompany me down stairs, I returned to Miss P——'s bed-room. She continued exactly in the condition in which I had left her. Though the water was hot enough almost to parboil her tender feet, it produced no sensible effect on the circulation or the state of the skin; and finding a strong determination of blood towards the regions of the head and neck, I determined to have her cupped between the shoulders. I went down stairs to drop a line to the apothecary, requesting him to come immediately with his cupping instruments. As I was delivering the note into the hands of a servant, a man rushed up to the open door where I was standing, and, breathless with haste, begged my instant attendance on a patient close by, who had just met with a severe accident.

Relying on the immediate arrival of Mr. —, the apothecary, I put on my hat and great-coat, took my umbrella, and followed the man who had summoned me out. It rained in torrents, for the storm, after about twenty minutes' intermission, burst forth again with unabated violence. The thunder and lightning were really awful!

[The patient to which the writer was called proved to be a notorious boxer, who had been thrown from his gig, in consequence of his horse being frightened by the lightning, and who, from the injury received, and the effect of a too free use of liquor, was raving like a madman.]

I hurried home, full of agitation at the scene I had just quitted, and melancholy apprehensions concerning the one to which I was returning. On reaching my lovely patient's room, I found, alas! no sensible effects produced by the very active means which had been adopted. She lay in bed, the aspect of her features apparently the same as when I last saw her. Her eyes were closed, her cheeks very pale, and mouth rather open, as if she were on the point of speaking. The hair hung in a little disorder on each side of her face, having escaped from beneath her cap. My wife sat beside her, grasping her right hand, weeping, and almost stupified; and the servant that was in the room when I entered seemed so bewildered as to be worse than useless. As it was now nearly nine o'clock, and getting dark, I ordered candles. I took one of them in my hand, opened her eyelids, and passed and repassed the candle several times before her eyes, but it produced no apparent effect. Neither the eyelids blinked, nor the pupils contracted. I then took out my penknife, and made a thrust with the open blade, as though I intended to plunge it into her right eye; it seemed as if I might have buried the blade in the socket for the shock or resistance called forth by the attempt. I took her hand in mine, having for a moment displaced my wife, and found it damp and cold; but when I suddenly left it suspended, it continued so for

a few moments, and only gradually resumed its former situation. I pressed the back of the blade of my penknife upon the flesh at the root of the nail (one of the tenderest parts, perhaps, of the whole body), but she evinced not the slightest sensation of pain. I shouted suddenly and loudly in her ears, but with similar ill success. I felt at an extremity. Completely baffled at all points, discouraged and agitated beyond expression, I left Miss P—— in the care of a nurse, whom I had sent for to attend upon her, at the instance of my wife, and hastened to my study, to see if my books could throw any light upon the nature of this, to me, new and inscrutable disorder. After hunting about for some time, and finding but little to the purpose, I prepared for bed, determining in the morning to send off for Miss P——'s mother, and Mr. N—— from Oxford, and also to call upon my eminent friend Dr. D——, and hear what his superior skill and experience might be able to suggest. In passing Miss P——'s room, I stepped in to take my farewell for the evening. "Beautiful, unfortunate creature!" thought I, as I stood gazing mournfully on her, with my candle in my hand, leaning against the bedpost. "What mystery is upon thee? What awful change has come over thee? the gloom of the grave and the light of life, both lying upon thee at once! Is thy mind palsied as thy body? How long is this strange state to last? How long art thou doomed to linger thus on the confines of both worlds, so that those, in either, who love thee may not claim thee? Heaven guide our thoughts to discover a remedy for thy fearful disorder!" I could not bear to look upon her any longer; and hurried up to bed, charging the nurse to summon me the moment that any change whatever was perceptible in Miss P——.

I dare say I shall be easily believed when I apprize the reader of the troubled night that followed such a troubled day. The thunder-storm itself, coupled with the predictions of the day, and apart

from its attendant incidents that have been mentioned, was calculated to leave an awful and permanent impression in one's mind. "If I were to live a century hence, I could not forget it," says a distinguished writer. "The thunder and lightning were more appalling than I ever witnessed, even in the West Indies—that region of storms and hurricanes. The air had been long surcharged with electricity; and I predicted several days beforehand, that we should have a storm of very unusual violence. But when with this we couple the strange prophecy that gained credit with a prodigious number of those one would have expected to be above such things, neither more nor less than that the world was to come to an end on that very day, and the judgment of mankind to follow,—I say, the coincidence of the events was not a little singular, and calculated to inspire common folk with wonder and fear. I dare say, if one could but find them out, that there were instances of people being frightened out of their wits on the occasion. I own to you candidly that I, for one, felt a little squeamish, and had not a little difficulty in bolstering up my courage with Virgil's *Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas*," &c.

I did not so much sleep as doze interruptedly for the first three or four hours after getting into bed. I, as well as my alarmed Emily, would start up occasionally, and sit listening, under the apprehension that we heard a shriek, or some other such sound, proceed from Miss P——'s room. The image of the blinded boxer flitted in fearful forms about me, and my ears seemed to ring with his curses. It must have been, I should think, between two and three o'clock, when I dreamed that I leaped out of bed, under an impulse sudden as irresistible, slipped on my dressing-gown, and hurried down stairs to the back drawing-room. On opening the door, I found the room lit up with funeral tapers, and the apparel of a dead-room spread about. At the farther end lay a coffin on tressels,

covered with a long sheet, with the figure of an old woman sitting beside it, with long streaming white hair, and her eyes, bright as the lightning, directed towards me with a fiendish stare of exultation. Suddenly, she rose up, pulled off the sheet that had covered the coffin, pushed aside the lid, plucked out the body of Miss P——, dashed it on the floor, and trampled upon it with apparent triumph! This horrid dream woke me, and haunted my waking thoughts. May I never pass such a dismal night again!

I rose from bed in the morning feverish and unrefreshed; and in a few minutes' time hurried to Miss P——'s room. The mustard applications to the soles of the feet, together with the blisters behind the ears, had produced the usual local effects without affecting the complaint. Both her pulse and breathing continued calm. The only change perceptible in the colour of her countenance was a slight pallor about the upper part of the cheeks: and I fancied there was an expression about her mouth approaching to a smile. She had, I found, continued throughout the night motionless and silent as a corpse. With a profound sigh I took my seat beside her, and examined the eyes narrowly, but perceived no change in them. What was to be done? How was she to be roused from this fearful, if not fatal lethargy?

While I was gazing intently on her features, I fancied that I perceived a slight muscular twitching about the nostrils. I stepped hastily down stairs (just as a drowning man, they say, catches at a straw), and returned with a phial of the strongest solution of ammonia, which I applied freely with a feather to the interior of the nostrils. This attempt also was unsuccessful as the former ones. I cannot describe the feelings with which I witnessed these repeated failures to stimulate her torpid sensibilities into action; and not knowing what to say or do, I returned to dress, with feelings of unutterable des-

pondency. While dressing, it struck me that a blister might be applied with success along the whole course of the spine. The more I thought of this expedient the more feasible it appeared: it would be such a direct and powerful appeal to the nervous system—in all probability the very seat and source of the disorder! I ordered one to be sent for instantly, and myself applied it, before I went down to breakfast. As soon as I had despatched the few morning patients that called, I wrote imperatively to Mr. N—— at Oxford, and to Miss P——'s mother, entreating them by all the love they bore Agnes to come to her instantly. I then set out for Dr. D——'s, whom I found just starting on his daily visits. I communicated the whole case to him. He listened with interest to my statement, and told me he had once a similar case in his own practice, which, alas! terminated fatally in spite of the most anxious and combined efforts of the *élite* of the faculty in London. He approved of the course I had adopted—most especially the blister on the spine; and earnestly recommended me to resort to galvanism, if Miss P—— should not be relieved from the fit before the evening, when he promised to call, and assist in carrying into effect what he recommended.

"Is it that beautiful girl I saw in your pew last Sunday, at church?" he inquired, suddenly.

"The same—the same!" I replied, with a sigh.

Dr. D—— continued silent for a moment or two.

"Poor creature!" he exclaimed, with an air of deep concern; "one so beautiful! Do you know I thought I now and then perceived a very remarkable expression in her eye, especially while that fine voluntary was playing. Is she an enthusiast about music?"

"Passionately—devotedly!"

"We'll try it!" he replied, briskly, with a confident air: "we'll try it! First, let us disturb the nervous torpor with a slight shock of galvanism, and then try

the effect of your organ.”\* I listened to the suggestion with interest, but was not quite so sanguine in my expectations as my friend appeared to be.

In the whole range of disorders that affect the human frame, there is not one so extraordinary, so mysterious, so incapable of management, as that which afflicted the truly unfortunate young lady whose case I am narrating. It has given rise to almost infinite speculation, and is admitted, I believe, on all hands to be—if I may so speak—a nosological anomaly. Van Swieten vividly and picturesquely enough compares it to that condition of the body which, according to ancient fiction, was produced in the beholder by the appalling sight of Medusa’s head:

“Saxifci Medusæ vultus.”


The medical writers of antiquity have left evidence of the existence of this disease in their day—but given the most obscure and unsatisfactory descriptions of it, confounding it, in many instances, with other disorders: apoplexy, epilepsy, and swooning. Celsus, according to Van Swieten, describes such patients as these in question under the term “*attoniti*,” which is a translation of the title I have prefixed to this paper: while in our own day, the celebrated Dr. Cullen classes it as a species of apoplexy, at the same time stating that he had never seen a genuine instance of catalepsy. He had always found, he says, those cases which were reported to be such to be feigned ones. More modern science, however, distinctly recognises the disease as one peculiar and independent; and is borne out by numerous unquestionable cases of catalepsy recorded by some of the most eminent members of the profession. Dr. Jebb, in particular, in the appendix to his “Select Cases of Paralysis of the Lower Ex-

\* I had at home—being myself a lover, though not a scientific one, of music—a very fine organ.

tremities," relates a remarkable and affecting instance of a cataleptic patient.

On returning home from my daily round, in which my dejected air was remarked by all the patients I had visited, I found no alteration whatever in Miss P——. The nurse had failed in forcing even arrow-root down her mouth, and, finding that it was not swallowed, was compelled to desist for fear of choking her. She was therefore obliged to resort to other means of conveying support to her exhausted frame. The blister on the spine, and the renewed sinapisms to the feet, had failed to make any impression! Thus was every successive attempt an utter failure! The disorder continued absolutely inaccessible to the approaches of medicine. The baffled attendants could but look at her, and lament. Good God, was Agnes to continue in this dreadful condition till her energies sank in death? What would become of her lover—of her mother? These considerations totally destroyed my peace of mind. I could neither think, read, eat, nor remain anywhere but in the chamber, where, alas! my presence was so un-availing!

Dr. D—— made his appearance soon after dinner, and we proceeded at once to the room where our patient lay. Though a little paler than before, her features were placid as those of the chiselled marble. Notwithstanding all she had suffered, and the fearful situation in which she lay at that moment, she still looked very beautiful. Her cap was off, and her rich auburn hair lay negligently on each side of her, upon the pillow. Her forehead was white as alabaster. She lay with her head turned a little on one side, and her two small white hands were clasped together over her bosom. This was the nurse's arrangement: for "Poor sweet young lady," she said, "I couldn't bear to see her laid straight along, with her arms close beside her like a corpse; so I tried to make her look as much asleep as possible." The impression of beauty, however, conveyed by her symmetrical





and tranquil features, was disturbed as soon as, lifting up the eyelids, we saw the fixed stare of the eyes. They were not glassy or corpse-like, but bright as those of life, with a little of the dreadful expression of epilepsy. We raised her in bed, and she, as before, sat upright, but with a blank absent aspect that was lamentable and unnatural. Her arms, when lifted and left suspended, did not fall, but *sank* down again gradually. We returned her gently to her recumbent posture; and determined at once to try the effect of galvanism upon her. My machine was soon brought into the room; and when we had duly arranged matters, we directed the nurse to quit the chamber for a short time, as the effect of galvanism is generally found too startling to be witnessed by a female spectator. I wish I had not myself seen it in the case of Miss P——! Her colour went and came: her eyelids and mouth started open: and she stared wildly about her with the aspect of one starting out of bed in a fright. I thought at one moment that the horrid spell was broken, for she sat up suddenly, leaned forward towards me, and her mouth opened as though she were about to speak!

“Agnes! Agnes! dear Agnes! Speak, speak but a word! Say you live!” I exclaimed, rushing forward, and folding my arms around her. Alas, she heard me, she saw me not,—but fell back in her former state! When the galvanic shock was conveyed to her limbs, it produced the usual effects, dreadful to behold in all cases, but agonizing to me, in the case of Miss P——. The last subject on which I had seen the effects of galvanism, previous to the present instance, was the body of an executed malefactor;\* and the associations revived on the

\* A word about that case, by-the-way, in passing. The spectacle was truly horrific. When I entered the room where the experiments were to take place, the body of a man named Carter, which had been cut down from the gallows scarce half an hour, was lying on the table; and the cap being removed, his frightful features, distorted with the agonies of

present occasion were almost too painful to bear. I begged my friend to desist, for I saw the attempt was hopeless, and I would not allow her tender frame to be agitated to no purpose. My mind misgave me for ever making the attempt. What, thought I, if we have fatally disturbed the nervous system, and prostrated the small remains of strength she had left! While I was torturing myself with such fears as these, Dr. D—— laid down the rod, with a melancholy air, exclaiming, "Well, what is to be done now? I cannot tell you how sanguine I was about the success of this experiment! \* \* \* Do you know whether she ever had a fit of epilepsy?" he inquired.

"No, not that I am aware of. I never heard of it, if she had."

"Had she generally a horror of thunder and lightning?"

"Oh, quite the contrary! she felt a sort of ecstasy on such occasions, and has written some beautiful verses during their continuance. *Such* seemed rather her hour of inspiration than otherwise!"

"Do you think the lightning itself has affected her? Do you think her sight is destroyed?"

"I have no means of knowing whether the immobility of the pupils arises from blindness, or is only one of the temporary effects of catalepsy."

"Then she believed the prophecy, you think, of the world's destruction on Tuesday?"

suffocation, were visible. The crime he had been hanged for was murder; and a brawny, desperate ruffian he looked! None of his clothes were removed. He wore a fustian jacket, and drab knee-breeches. The first time that the galvanic shock was conveyed to him will never, I dare say, be forgotten by any one present. We all shrank from the table in consternation, with the momentary belief that we had positively brought the man back to life; for he suddenly sprang up into a sitting posture, his arms waved wildly, the colour rushed into his cheeks, his lips were drawn apart, so as to show all his teeth, and his eyes glared at us with apparent fury. One young man, a medical student, shrieked violently, and was carried out in a swoon. One gentleman present, who happened to be nearest to the upper part of the body, was almost knocked down with the violent blow he received from the left arm. It was some time before any of us could recover presence of mind sufficient to proceed with the experiments.

"No, I don't think she exactly *believed* it; but I am sure that day brought with it awful apprehensions—or, at least, a fearful degree of uncertainty."

"Well, between ourselves, —, there was something very strange in the coincidence, was not there? Nothing in life ever shook my firmness as it was shaken yesterday! I almost fancied the earth was quivering in its sphere!"

"It was a dreadful day! one I shall never forget! *That* is the image of it," I exclaimed, pointing to the poor sufferer, "which will be engraven on my mind as long as I live! But the worst is, perhaps, yet to be told you: Mr. N——, her lover, to whom she was very soon to have been married, *he* will be here shortly to see her—"

"Alas!" exclaimed Dr. D——, 'clasping his hands, and eying Miss P—— with intense commiseration, "what a fearful bride for him! 'twill drive him mad!"

"I dread his coming; I know not what we shall do! And then there's her *mother*—poor old lady!—her I have written to, and expect almost hourly!"

"Why—what an accumulation of shocks and miseries! it will be upsetting *you*!" said my friend, seeing me pale and agitated.

"Well," he continued, "I cannot now stay here longer—your misery is catching; and, besides, I am most pressingly engaged; but you may rely on my services, if you should require them in any way."

My friend took his departure, leaving me more disconsolate than ever. Before retiring to bed, I rubbed in mustard upon the chief surfaces of the body, hoping, though faintly, that it might have some effect in rousing the system. I kneeled down, before stepping into bed, and earnestly prayed, that as all human efforts seemed baffled, the Almighty would set her free from the mortal thralldom in which she lay, and restore her to life, and those who loved her more than life! Morning came—it found me by her

bedside as usual, and her in nowise altered—apparently neither better nor worse! If the unvarying monotony of my descriptions should fatigue the reader, what must the actual monotony and hopelessness have been to me!

While I was sitting beside Miss P——, I heard my youngest boy come down stairs, and ask to be let into the room. He was a little fair-haired youngster, about three years of age, and had always been an especial favourite of Miss P——'s,—her “own sweet pet,” as the poor girl herself called him. Determined to throw no chance away, I beckoned him in, and took him on my knee. He called to Miss P——, as if he thought her asleep, patting her face with his little hands, and kissed her. “Wake, wake! Cousin Aggy, get up!” he cried; “papa says 'tis time to get up! Do you sleep with eyes open?—Eh?—Cousin Aggy?” He looked at her intently for some moments, and seemed frightened. He turned pale, and struggled to get off my knee. I allowed him to go, and he ran to his mother, who was standing at the foot of the bed, and hid his face behind her.

I passed breakfast-time in great apprehension, expecting the two arrivals I have mentioned. I knew not how to prepare either the mother or the betrothed husband for the scene that awaited them, and which I had not particularly described to them. It was with no little trepidation that I heard the startling knock of the general-postman; and with infinite astonishment and doubt, that I took out of the servant's hands a letter from Mr. N——, for poor Agnes! For a while I knew not what to make of it. Had he received the alarming express I had forwarded to him, and did he write to Miss P——! Or was he unexpectedly absent from Oxford when it arrived?—The latter supposition was corroborated by the post-mark,

\* I had been examining her eyes, and had only half-closed the lids.

which I observed was Lincoln. I felt it my duty to open the letter. Alas! it was in a gay strain—unusually gay for N——: informing Agnes that he had been suddenly summoned into Lincolnshire, to his cousin's wedding, where he was very happy, both on account of his relatives' happiness, and the anticipation of a similar scene being in store for himself! Every line was buoyant with hope and animation; but the postscript most affected me.

“P.S. *The 10th of July, by-the-way—my Aggy!*—Is it all over with us, sweet Pythonissa? Are you and I at this moment on separate fragments of the globe? I shall seal my conquest over you with a kiss when I see you! Remember, you parted from me in a pet, naughty one!—and kissed me rather coldly! But that is the way that your sex always end arguments, when you are vanquished!”

I read these lines in silence; my wife burst into tears. As soon as I had a little recovered from the emotion occasioned by a perusal of the letter, I hastened to send a second summons to Mr. N——, and directed it to him in Lincoln, whither he had requested Miss P—— to address him. Without explaining the precise nature of Miss P——'s seizure, I gave him warning that he must hurry up to town instantly; and that even then it was to the last degree doubtful whether he would see her alive. After this little occurrence, I could hardly trust myself to go up stairs again and look upon the unfortunate girl. My heart fluttered at the door, and when I entered I burst into tears. I could utter no more than the words, “Poor—poor Agnes!”—and withdrew.

I was shocked, and indeed enraged, to find in one of the morning papers a paragraph stating, though inaccurately, the nature of Miss P——'s illness. Who could have been so unfeeling as to make the

poor girl an object of public wonder and pity? I never ascertained, though I made every inquiry, from whom the intelligence was communicated.

One of my patients that day happened to be a niece of the venerable and honourable Dean of —, at whose house she resided. He was in the room when I called; and to explain what he called “the gloom of my manner,” I gave him a full account of the melancholy event which had occurred. He listened to me till the tears ran down his face.

“But you have not yet tried the effect of *music*, of which you say *she* is so fond! Do you not intend to resort to it?” I told him it was our intention; and that our agitation was the only reason why we did not try the effect of it immediately after the galvanism.

“Now, doctor, excuse an old clergyman, will you?” said the venerable and pious dean, laying his hand on my arm, “and let me suggest that the experiment may not be the less successful with the blessing of God, if it be introduced in the course of a religious service. Come, doctor, what say you?” I paused.

“Have you any objection to my calling at your house this evening, and reading the service appointed by our church for the visitation of the sick? It will not be difficult to introduce the most solemn and affecting strains of music, or to let it precede or follow.” Still I hesitated, and yet I scarce knew why. “Come, doctor, you know I am no enthusiast—I am not generally considered a fanatic. Surely, when man has done his best, and fails, he should not hesitate to turn to God!” The good old man’s words sank into my soul, and diffused in it a cheerful and humble hope that the blessing of Providence would attend the means suggested. I acquiesced in the dean’s proposal with delight, and even eagerness; and it was arranged that he should be at my house between seven and eight o’clock that evening. I think I have already observed that I had an organ, a

very fine and powerful one, in my back drawing-room ; and this instrument was the eminent delight of poor Miss P——. She would sit down at it for hours together, and her performance would not have disgraced a professor. I hoped that on the eventful occasion that was approaching, the tones of her favourite music, with the blessing of Heaven, might rouse a slumbering responsive chord in her bosom, and aid in dispelling the cruel “charm that deadened her.” She certainly could not last long in the condition in which she now lay. Every thing that medicine could do had been tried—in vain ; and if the evening’s experiment—our forlorn hope—failed, we must, though with bleeding hearts, submit to the will of Providence, and resign her to the grave. I looked forward with intense anxiety—with alternate hope and fear—to the engagement of the evening.

On returning home, late in the afternoon, I found poor Mrs. P—— had arrived in town, in obedience to my summons ; and heart-breaking, I learned, was her first interview, if such it may be called, with her daughter. Her shrieks alarmed the whole house, and even arrested the attention of the neighbours. I had left instructions, that in case of her arrival during my absence, she should be shown at once, without any precautions, into the presence of Miss P—— ; with the hope, faint though it was, that the abruptness of her appearance, and the violence of her grief, might operate as a salutary shock upon the stagnant energies of her daughter. “My child ! my child ! my child !” she exclaimed, rushing up to the bed with frantic haste, and clasping the insensible form of her daughter in her arms, where she held her till she fell fainting into those of my wife. What a dread contrast was there between the frantic gestures, the passionate lamentations of the mother, and the stony silence and motionlessness of the daughter !” One little but affecting incident occurred in my

presence. Mrs. P—— (as yet unacquainted with the peculiar nature of her daughter's seizure) had snatched Miss P——'s hand to her lips, kissed it repeatedly, and suddenly let it go to press her own hand upon her head, as if to repress a rising hysterical feeling. Miss P——'s arm, as usual, remained for a moment or two suspended, and only gradually sank down upon the bed. It looked as if she voluntarily continued it in that position, with a cautioning air. Methinks I see at this moment the affrighted stare with which Mrs. P—— regarded the outstretched arm, her body recoiling from the bed, as though she expected her daughter were about to do or appear something dreadful! I learned from Mrs. P——, that her mother, the grandmother of Agnes, was reported to have been twice affected in a similar manner, though apparently from a different cause; so that there seemed something like an hereditary tendency towards it, even though Mrs. P—— herself had never experienced any thing of the kind.

As the memorable evening advanced, the agitation of all who were acquainted with or interested in the approaching ceremony increased. Mrs. P——, I need hardly say, embraced the proposal with thankful eagerness. About half-past seven, my friend Dr. D—— arrived pursuant to his promise; and he was soon after followed by the organist of a neighbouring church—an old acquaintance, and who was a constant visiter at my house, for the purpose of performing and giving instructions on the organ. I requested him to commence playing Martin Luther's hymn—the favourite one of Agnes—as soon as she should be brought into the room. About eight o'clock the dean's carriage drew up. I met him at the door.

"Peace be to this house, and to all that dwell in it!" he exclaimed, as soon as he entered. I led him up stairs; and without uttering a word, he took the seat prepared for him, before a table, on which



lay a Bible and prayer-book. After a moment's pause, he directed the sick person to be brought into the room. I stepped up stairs, where I found my wife, with the nurse, had finished dressing Miss P——. I thought her paler than usual, and that her cheeks seemed hollower than when I had last seen her. There was an air of melancholy sweetness and languor about her, that inspired the beholder with the keenest sympathy. With a sigh, I gathered her slight form into my arms, a shawl was thrown over her, and, followed by my wife and the nurse, who supported Mrs. P——, I carried her down stairs, and placed her in an easy recumbent posture, in a large old family-chair, which stood between the organ and the dean's table. How strange and mournful was her appearance! Her luxuriant hair was gathered up beneath a cap, the whiteness of which was equalled by that of her countenance. Her eyes were closed; and this, added to the paleness of her features, her perfect passiveness, and her being enveloped in a long white unruffled morning-dress, which appeared not unlike a shroud at first sight—made her look rather a corpse than a living being! As soon as Dr. D—— and I had taken seats on each side of our poor patient, the solemn strains of the organ commenced. I never appreciated music, and especially the sublime hymn of Luther, so much as on that occasion. My eyes were fixed with agonizing scrutiny on Miss P——. Bar after bar of the music melted on the ear, and thrilled upon the heart; but, alas! produced no more effect upon the placid sufferer than the pealing of an abbey organ on the statues around! My heart began to misgive me: if this one last expedient failed! When the music ceased, we all kneeled down, and the dean, in a solemn and rather tremulous tone of voice, commenced reading appropriate passages from the service for the visitation of the sick. When he had concluded the 71st psalm, he approached the chair of Miss P——, dropped upon one knee, held

her right hand in his, and in a voice broken with emotion, read the following affecting verses from the 8th chapter of St. Luke :—

“ While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master.

“ But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole.

“ And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden. And all wept and bewailed her; but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead.

“ And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, *Maid, arise. And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway.*”

While he was reading the passage which I have marked in italics, my heated fancy almost persuaded me that I saw the eyelids of Miss P—— moving. I trembled from head to foot; but, alas! it was a delusion.

The dean, much affected, was proceeding with the fifty-fifth verse, when such a tremendous and long-continued knocking was heard at the street door as seemed likely to break it open. Every one started up from their knees, as if electrified—all moved but unhappy Agnes, and stood in silent agitation and astonishment. Still the knocking was continued, almost without intermission. My heart suddenly misgave me as to the cause.

“ Go—go—see if—” stammered my wife, pale as ashes—endeavouring to prop up the drooping mother of our patient. Before any one had stirred from the spot on which he was standing, the door was burst open, and in rushed Mr. N——, wild in his aspect, frantic in his gesture, and his dress covered with dust from head to foot. We stood gazing at him, as though his appearance had petrified us.

"Agnes, my Agnes!" he exclaimed, as if choked for want of breath.

"Agnes! come!" he gasped, while a laugh appeared on his face that had a gleam of madness in it.

"Mr. N——, what are you about? For mercy's sake be calm! Let me lead you for a moment into another room, and all shall be explained," said I, approaching and grasping him firmly by the arm.

"Agnes!" he continued, in a tone that made us tremble. He moved towards the chair in which Miss P—— lay. I endeavoured to interpose, but he thrust me aside. The venerable dean attempted to dissuade him, but met with no better a reception than myself.

"Agnes!" he reiterated, in a hoarse, sepulchral whisper, "why won't you speak to me? what are they doing to you?" He stepped within a foot of the chair where she lay, calm and immovable as death! We stood by, watching his movements, in terrified apprehension and uncertainty. He dropped his hat, which he had been grasping with convulsive force, and before any one could prevent him, or even suspect what he was about, he snatched Miss P—— out of the chair, and compressed her in his arms with frantic force, while a delirious laugh burst from his lips. We rushed forward to extricate her from his grasp. His arms gradually relaxed—he muttered, "Music! music! a dance!" and almost at the moment that we removed Miss P—— from him, fell senseless into the arms of the organist. Mrs. P—— had fainted; my wife seemed on the verge of hysterics, and the nurse was crying violently. Such a scene of trouble and terror I have seldom witnessed. I hurried with the poor unconscious girl up stairs, laid her upon the bed, shut and bolted the door after me, and hardly expected to find her alive; her pulse, however, was calm, as it had been throughout the seizure. The calm of the Dead Sea seemed upon her!

\* \* \* \* \*

I feel, however, that I should not protract these painful scenes; and shall therefore hurry to their close. The first letter which I despatched to Oxford after Mr. N——, happened to bear on the outside the words "special haste!" which procured its being forwarded by express after Mr. N——. The consternation with which he received and read it may be imagined. He set off for town that instant in a post-chaise and four; but finding their speed insufficient, he took to horseback for the last fifty miles; and rode at a rate which nearly destroyed both horse and rider. Hence his sudden appearance at my house, and the phrensy of his behaviour. After Miss P—— had been carried up stairs, it was thought imprudent for Mr. N—— to continue at my house, as he exhibited every symptom of incipient brain fever, and might prove wild and unmanageable. He was therefore removed at once to a house within a few doors off, which was let out in furnished lodgings. Dr. D—— accompanied him, and bled him immediately, very copiously. I have no doubt that Mr. N—— owed his life to that timely measure. He was placed in bed, and put at once under the most vigorous antiphlogistic treatment.

The next evening beheld Dr. D——, the Dean of ——, and myself, around the bedside of Agnes. All of us expressed the most gloomy apprehensions. The dean had been offering up a devout and most affecting prayer.

"Well, my friend," said he to me, "she is in the hands of God! All that man can do has been done; let us resign ourselves to the will of Providence!"

"Ay, nothing but a miracle can save her, I fear," replied Dr. D——.

"How much longer do you think it probable, humanly speaking, that the system can continue in this state, so as to give hopes of ultimate recovery?" inquired the dean.

"I cannot say," I replied, with a sigh. "She *must*

sink, and speedily. She has not received, since she was first seized, as much nourishment as would serve for an infant's meal!"

"I have an impression that she will die suddenly," said Dr. D——; "possibly within the next twelve hours; for I cannot understand how her energies can recover from or bear longer this fearful paralysis!"

"Alas, I fear so too!"

"I have heard of some frightful instances of premature burial in cases like this," said the dean. "I hope in Heaven that you will not think of committing her remains to the earth before you are satisfied, beyond a doubt, that life is extinct." I made no reply; my emotions nearly choked me; I could not bear to contemplate such an event.

"Do you know," said Dr. D——, with an apprehensive air, "I have been thinking latterly of the awful possibility that, notwithstanding the stagnation of her physical powers, her MIND may be sound, and perfectly conscious of all that has transpired about her!"

"Why—why," stammered the dean, turning pale—"what if she has—has HEARD all that has been said!"\*

"Ay!" replied Dr. D——, unconsciously sinking his voice to a whisper, "I know of a case,—in fact a friend of mine has just published it,—in which a woman—" There was a faint knocking at the door, and I stepped to it, for the purpose of inquiring what was wanted. While I was in the act of closing it again, I overheard Dr. D——'s voice exclaim, in an affrighted tone, "Great God!" and on turning round, I saw the dean moving from the bed, his face white as ashes, and he fell from his chair, as if in a

\* In almost every known instance of recovery from catalepsy, the patients have declared that they heard every word that had been uttered beside them.

fit. How shall I describe what I saw on approaching the bed?

The moment before, I had left Miss P—— lying in her usual position, and with her eyes closed. They were now wide open, and staring upwards, with an expression I have no language to describe. It reminded me of what I had seen when I had first discovered her in the fit. Blood, too, was streaming from her nostrils and mouth—in short, a more frightful spectacle I never witnessed. In a moment both Dr. D—— and I lost all power of motion. Here, then, was the spell broken! The trance over, I implored Dr. D—— to recollect himself, and conduct the dean from the room, while I attended to Miss P——. The nurse was instantly at my side, shaking like an aspen-leaf. She quickly procured warm water, sponges, cloths, &c., with which she at once wiped away and encouraged the bleeding. The first sound uttered by Miss P—— was a long deep-drawn sigh, which seemed to relieve her bosom of an intolerable sense of oppression. Her eyes gradually closed again, and she moved her head away, at the same time raising her trembling right hand to her face. Again she sighed, again opened her eyes, and, to my delight, their expression was more natural than before. She looked languidly about her for a moment, as if examining the bed-curtains, and her eyes closed again. I sent for some weak brandy and water, and gave her a little in a tea-spoon. She swallowed it with great difficulty. I ordered some warm water to be got ready for her feet, to equalize the circulation; and while it was preparing, sat by her, watching every motion of her features with the most eager anxiety. “How are you, Agnes?” I whispered, kissing her. She turned languidly towards me, opened her eyes, and shook her head feebly, but gave me no answer.

“Do you feel pain anywhere?” I inquired. A faint smile stole about her mouth, but she did not utter a syllable. Sensible that her exhausted con-

dition required repose, I determined not to tax her newly recovered energies ; so I ordered her a gentle composing draught, and left her in the care of the nurse, promising to return by-and-by, to see how my patient went on. I found that the dean had left. After swallowing a little wine and water, he recovered sufficiently from the shock he had received to be able, with Dr. D——'s assistance, to step into his carriage, leaving his solemn benediction for Miss P——.

As it was growing late, I sent my wife to bed, and ordered coffee in my study, whither I retired, and sat lost in conjecture and revery till near one o'clock. I then repaired to my patient's room ; but my entrance startled her from a sleep that had lasted almost since I had left. As soon as I sat down by her, she opened her eyes, and my heart leaped with joy to see their increasing calmness, their expression resembling what had often delighted me while she was in health. After eying me steadily for a few moments, she seemed suddenly to recognise me. " Kiss me !" she whispered, in the faintest possible whisper, while a smile stole over her languid features. I did kiss her ; and in doing so my tears fell upon her cheek.

" Don't cry !" she whispered again, in a tone as feeble as before. She gently moved her hand into mine, and I clasped the trembling lilled fingers with an emotion I cannot express. She noticed my agitation ; and the tears came into her eyes, while her lip quivered as though she were going to speak. I implored her, however, not to utter a word, till she was better able to do it without exhaustion ; and lest my presence should tempt her beyond her strength, I once more bade her good night, her poor slender fingers once more compressed mine, and I left her to the care of the nurse, with a whispered caution to step to me instantly, if any change should take place in Agnes. I could not sleep ; I felt a prodigious bur-

den removed from my mind; and woke my wife, that she might share in my joy.

I received no summons during the night; and on entering her room about nine o'clock in the morning, I found that Miss P—— had taken a little arrow-root in the course of the night, and slept calmly, with but few intervals. She had sighed frequently; and once or twice conversed for a short time with the nurse about *heaven*—as I understood. She was much stronger than I had expected to find her. I kissed her, and she asked me how I was—in a tone that surprised me by its strength and firmness.

“Is the storm over?” she inquired, looking towards the window.

“Oh yes—long, long ago!” I replied, seeing at once that she seemed to have no consciousness of the interval that had elapsed.

“And are you all well? Mrs. ——” (my wife), “how is she?”

“You shall see her shortly.”

“Then no one was hurt?”

“Not a hair of our heads!”

“How frightened I must have been!”

“Pho, pho, Agnes! nonsense! forget it!”

“Then the world is not—there has been no—is all the same as it was?” she murmured, eying me apprehensively.

“The world come to an end, do you mean?” She nodded with a disturbed air. “Oh, no, no! It was merely a thunder-storm.”

“And is it quite over, and gone?”

“Long ago! Do you feel hungry?” I inquired, hoping to direct her thoughts from a topic I saw agitated her.

“Did you ever see such lightning?” she asked, without regarding my question.

“Why, certainly it was very alarming.”

“Yes, it was! Do you know, doctor,” she con-



tinued, with a mysterious air, "I—I—saw—yes—there were terrible faces in the lightning—"

"Come, child, you rave."

"They seemed coming towards the world—"

Her voice trembled, the colour of her face changed.

"Well, if you *will* talk such nonsense, Agnes, I must leave you. I will go and fetch my wife. Would you like to see her?"

"*Tell N—— to come to me to-day—I must see him.* I have a message for him!" She said this with a sudden energy that surprised me, while her eye brightened as it settled on me. I kissed her, and retired. The last words surprised and disturbed me. Were her intellects affected? How did she know, how could she conjecture that he was within reach? I took an opportunity of asking the nurse whether she had mentioned Mr. N——'s name to her, but not a syllable had been interchanged upon the subject.

Before setting out on my daily visits, I stepped into her room, to take my leave. I had kissed her, and was quitting the room, when, happening to look back, I saw her beckoning to me. I returned.

"I must see N—— this evening!" said she with a solemn emphasis that startled me; and as soon as she had uttered the words, she turned her head from me, as if she wished no more to be said.

My first visit was to Mr. N——, whom I found in a very weak state, but so much recovered from his illness, as to be sitting up, and partially dressed. He was perfectly calm and collected; and, in answer to his earnest inquiries, I gave him a full account of the nature of Miss P——'s illness. He received the intelligence of the favourable change that had occurred with evident though silent ecstasy. After much inward doubt and hesitation, I thought I might venture to tell him of the parting—the twice repeated request she had made. The intelligence blanched his already pallid cheeks to a whiter hue, and he trembled violently.

"Did you tell her I was in town? Did she recollect me?"

"No one has breathed your name to her!" I replied. \* \* \* \*

"Well, doctor—if, on the whole, you think so—that it would be safe," said N——, after we had talked much on the matter, "I will step over and see her; but, it looks very—very strange!"

"Whatever whim may actuate her, I think it better, on the whole, to gratify her. Your refusal may be attended with infinitely worse effects than an interview. However, you shall hear from me again. I will see if she continues in the same mind; and, if so, I will step over and tell you." I took my leave.

A few minutes before stepping down to dinner, I sat beside Miss P——, making my usual inquiries; and was gratified to find that her progress, though slow, seemed sure. I was going to kiss her, before leaving, when, with similar emphasis to that she had previously displayed, she again said,

"Remember! N—— must be here to-night!"

I was confounded. What could be the meaning of this mysterious pertinacity? I felt distracted with doubt, and dissatisfied with myself for what I had told to N——. I felt answerable for whatever ill effects might ensue; and yet, what could I do?

It was evening—a mild, though lustrous, July evening. The skies were all blue and white, save where the retiring sun-light produced a mellow mixture of colours towards the west. Not a breath of air disturbed the serene complacency. My wife and I sat on each side of the bed where lay our lovely invalid, looking, despite of her recent illness, beautiful, and in comparative health. Her hair was parted with negligent simplicity over her pale forehead. Her eyes were brilliant, and her cheeks occasionally flushed with colour. She spoke scarce a word to us, as we

sat beside her. I gazed at her with doubt and apprehension. I was aware that health could not possibly produce the colour and vivacity of her complexion and eyes; and felt at a loss to what I should refer it.

"Agnes, love! How beautiful is the setting sun!" exclaimed my wife, drawing aside the curtains.

"Raise me! Let me look at it!" replied Miss P——, faintly. She gazed earnestly at the magnificent object for some minutes, and then abruptly said to me—

"He will be here soon?"

"In a few moments I expect him. But, Agnes, why do you wish to see him?"

She sighed, and shook her head.

It had been arranged that Dr. D—— should accompany Mr. N—— to my house, and conduct him up stairs, after strongly enjoining on him the necessity there was for controlling his feelings, and displaying as little emotion as possible. My heart leaped into my mouth, as the saying is, when I heard the expected knock at the door.

"N—— is come at last!" said I, in a gentle tone, looking earnestly at her, to see if she was agitated. It was not the case. She sighed, but evinced no trepidation.

"Shall he be shown in at once?" I inquired.

"No; wait a few moments," replied the extraordinary girl, and seemed lost in thought for about a minute. "Now!" she exclaimed; and I sent down the nurse, herself pale and trembling with apprehension, to request the attendance of Dr. D—— and Mr. N——.

As they were heard slowly approaching the room, I looked anxiously at my patient, and kept my fingers at her pulse. There was not a symptom of flutter or agitation. At length the door was opened, and Dr. D—— slowly entered, with N—— upon his arm. As soon as his pale, trembling figure was visi-

ble, a calm and heavenly smile beamed upon the countenance of Miss P——. It was full of ineffable loveliness! She stretched out her right arm; he pressed it to his lips, without uttering a word.

My eyes were riveted on the features of Miss P——. Either they deceived me, or I saw a strange alteration, as if a cloud were stealing over her face. I was right! We all observed her colour fading rapidly. I rose from my chair; Dr. D—— also came nearer, thinking she was on the verge of fainting. Her eyes were fixed upon the flushed features of her lover, and gleamed with radiance. She gently elevated both her arms towards him, and he leaned over her.

“PREPARE!” she exclaimed, in a low, thrilling tone; her features became paler and paler—her arms fell. She had spoken, she had breathed her last. She was dead!

Within twelve months, poor N—— followed her; and to the period of his death, no other word or thought seemed to occupy his mind but the momentous warning which issued from the expiring lips of Agnes P——, PREPARE!

I have no mystery to solve, no denouement to make. I tell the facts as they occurred, and hope they may not be told in vain.

## THE BOXER.

The patient who so abruptly, and under circumstances inopportunately required my services (see p. 245), proved to be one Bill —, a notorious boxer, who, in returning that evening from a great prize-fight, had been thrown out of his gig, the horse being frightened by the lightning, and the rider, besides, much the worse for liquor, had his ankle dreadfully dislocated. He had been taken up by some passengers, and conveyed with great difficulty to his own residence, a public-house, not three minutes' walk from where I lived. The moment I entered the tap-room, which I had to pass on my way to the staircase, I heard his groans, or rather howls, overhead. The excitement of intoxication, added to the agonies occasioned by his accident, had driven him, I was told, nearly mad. He was uttering the most revolting execrations as I entered his room. He damned himself—his ill-luck (for it seemed he had lost considerable sums on the fight)—the combatants—the horse that threw him—the thunder and lightning—every thing, in short, and everybody about him. The sound of the thunder was sublime music to me, and the more welcome, because it drowned the blasphemous bellowing of the monster I was visiting. Yes—there lay the burly boxer, stretched upon the bed, with none of his dress removed, except the boot from the limb that was injured—his new blue coat, with glaring yellow buttons, and drab knee-breeches, soiled with the street mud into which he had been precipitated—his huge limbs, writhing in restless agony over the bed—his fists clenched, and his flat, iron-featured face swollen and distorted with pain and rage.

“But, my good woman,” said I, pausing at the door, addressing myself to the boxer’s wife, who,

wringing her hands, had conducted me up stairs ; " I assure you, I am not the person you should have sent to. It's a surgeon's, not a physician's case ; I fear I can't do much for him—quite out of my way."

" Oh, for God's sake—for the love of God, don't say so !" gasped the poor creature, with affrighted emphasis—" oh, do *something* for him, or he'll drive us all out of our senses—he'll be killing us !"

" Do something !" roared my patient, who had overheard the last words of his wife, turning his bloated face towards me—" *do something*, indeed ! ay, and be — to you ! Here, here—look ye, doctor—look ye *here* !" he continued, pointing to the wounded foot, which, all crushed and displaced, and the stocking soaked with blood, presented a shocking appearance—" look here, indeed !—ah, that — horse ! that — horse !" his teeth gnashed, and his right hand was lifted up, clenched, with fury—" If I don't break every bone in his — body, as soon as ever I can stir this cursed leg again !"

I felt, for a moment, as though I had entered the very pit and presence of Satan, for the lightning was gleaming over his ruffianly figure incessantly, and the thunder rolling close overhead while he was speaking.

" Hush ! hush ! you'll drive the doctor away ! For pity's sake, hold your tongue, or Doctor — won't come into the room to you !" gasped his wife, dropping on her knees beside him.

" Ha, ha ! Let him go ! Only let him stir a step, and lame as I am, — me ! if I don't jump out of bed, and teach him civility ! *Here*, you doctor, as you call yourself ! what's to be done ?" Really I was too much shocked, at the moment, to know. I was half inclined to leave the room immediately—and had a fair plea for doing so, in the *surgical* nature of the case ; but the agony of the fellow's wife induced me to do violence to my own feelings, and stay. After directing a person to be sent off, in my name, for the nearest surgeon, I addressed myself to my task, and

proceeded to remove the stocking. His whole body quivered with the anguish it occasioned; and I saw such fury gathering in his features, that I began to dread lest he might rise up in a sudden phrensy, and strike me.

"Oh! oh! oh!—Curse your clumsy hands! You don't know no more nor a child," he groaned, "what you're about! Leave it—leave it alone! Give over with ye! doctor, —, I say—be off!"

"Mercy, mercy, doctor," sobbed his wife, in a whisper, fearing from my momentary pause that I was going to take her husband at his word; "don't go away! Oh, go on—go on! It *must* be done, you know! Never mind what he says! He's only a little the worse for liquor now—and—and then the *pain*! Go on, doctor! He'll thank you the more for it to-morrow!"

"Wife! here!" shouted her husband. The woman instantly stepped up to him. He stretched out his Herculean arm, and grasped her by the shoulder.

"So—you —! I'm drunk, am I? I'm *drunk*, eh —you lying —!" he exclaimed, and jerked her violently away, right across the room, to the door, where the poor creature fell down, but presently rose, crying bitterly.

"Get away! Get off—get down stairs—if you don't want me to serve you the same again! Say I'm drunk—you beast!" With frantic gestures she obeyed, rushed down stairs, and I was left alone with her husband. I was disposed to follow her abruptly, but the positive dread of my life (for he might leap out of bed and kill me with a blow) kept me to my task. My flesh crept with disgust at touching his! I examined the wound, which undoubtedly must have given him torture enough to drive him mad, and bathed it in warm water; resolved to pay no attention to his abuse, and quit the instant that the surgeon who had been sent for made his appearance. At length he came. I breathed more freely,

resigned the case into his hands, and was going to take up my hat, when he begged me to continue in the room, with such an earnest apprehensive look, that I reluctantly remained. I saw he dreaded as much being left alone with his patient as I. It need hardly be said that every step that was taken in dressing the wound was attended with the vilest execrations of the patient. Such a foul-mouthed ruffian I never encountered anywhere. It seemed as though he was possessed of a devil. What a contrast to the sweet speechless sufferer whom I had left at home, and to whom my heart yearned to return!

The storm still continued raging. The rain had comparatively ceased, but the thunder and lightning made their appearance with fearful frequency and fierceness. I drew down the blind of the window, observing to the surgeon that the lightning seemed to startle our patient.

"Put it up again! Put up that blind again, I say!" he cried impatiently. "D'ye think I'm afeard'd of the lightning, like my — horse to-day? Put it up again—or I'll get out and do it myself!" I did as he wished. Reproof or expostulation was useless. "Ha!" he exclaimed, in a low tone of fury, rubbing his hands together, in a manner bathing them in the fiery stream, as a flash of lightning gleamed ruddily over him. "*There* it is!—Curse it—just the sort of flash that frightened my horse, d—— it!"—and the impious wretch shook his fist, and "grinned horribly a ghastly smile!"

"Be silent, sir! be silent! or we will both leave you instantly. Your behaviour is impious! It is frightful to witness! Forbear—lest the vengeance of God descend upon you!"

"Come, come—none of your — methodism *here*! Go on with your business! Stick to your shop," interrupted the boxer.

"Does not *that* rebuke your blasphemies?" I inquired, suddenly shading my eyes from the vivid



stream of lightning that burst into the room, while the thunder rattled overhead, apparently in fearful proximity. When I removed my hands from my eyes, and opened them, the first object that they fell upon was the figure of the boxer, sitting upright in bed with both hands stretched out, just as those of Elymas the sorcerer, in the picture of Raphael—his face the colour of a corpse—and his eyes, almost starting out of their sockets, directed with a horrid stare towards the window. His lips moved not—nor did he utter a sound. It was clear what had occurred. The wrathful fire of Heaven, that had glanced harmlessly around us, had blinded the blasphemer. Yes—the sight of his eyes had perished. While we were gazing at him in silent awe, he fell back in bed, speechless, and clasped his hands over his breast, seemingly in an attitude of despair. But for that motion, we should have thought him dead. Shocked beyond expression, Mr. ——— paused in his operations. I examined the eyes of the patient. The pupils were both dilated to their utmost extent, and immoveable. I asked him many questions, but he answered not a word. Occasionally, however, a groan of horror—remorse—agony (or all combined)—would burst from his pent bosom; and this was the only evidence he gave of consciousness. He moved over on his right side—his “pale face turned to the wall”—and unclasping his hands, pressed the forefinger of each with convulsive force upon the eyes. Mr. ——— proceeded with his task. What a contrast between the present and past behaviour of our patient! Do what we would—put him to ever such great pain—he neither uttered a syllable, nor expressed any symptoms of passion, as before. There was, however, no necessity for my continuing any longer; so I left the case in the hands of Mr. ———, who undertook to acquaint Mrs. ——— with the frightful accident that had happened to her husband. What two scenes had I witnessed that evening!

## CHAPTER XIV.

## THE MAGDALEN.

DESPISED daughter of frailty ! outcast of outcasts ! poor wayward lamb, torn by the foulest wolf of the forest ! my tears shall fall on your memory, as often they did over the wretched recital of sin and shame which I listened to on your deserted deathbed ! Oh that they could have fallen on you early enough to wash away the first stain of guilt ; that they could have trickled down upon your heart in time to soften it once more into virtue !—Ill-fated victim, towards whom the softest heart of tenderness that throbs in your sex beats, not with sympathy, but scorn and anger ! *My* heart hath yearned for thee when none else knew of thee, or cared for thy fate ! Yes—and above all, (devoutly be the hope expressed !) the voice of heaven whispered in thine aching ear peace and forgiveness ; so that death was but as the dark seal of thy pardon, registered in the courts of Eternal Mercy !

Many as are the scenes of guilt and misery sketched in this Diary, I know not that I have approached any with feelings of such profound and unmixed sorrow as that which it is my painful lot now to lay before the public. Reader, if your tears start, if your heart ache as you go on with the gloomy narrative—pause, that those tears may swell into a stream, that that heart may well-nigh break, to think how common, how every-day is the story !

Look round you upon the garden of humanity ; see where the lilies, lovely and white as snow in their virgin purity, are blooming—see—see how many of them suddenly fade, wither, fall ! Go nearer

—and behold an adder lying coiled around their stems! Think of this—and then be yourself—young man, or old—**THAT ADDER** if you can!

About nine o'clock on a miserable Sunday evening in October, 18—, we were sitting quietly at home around our brisk fire, listening, in occasional intervals of silence, to the rain which, as it had during the whole of the day, still came down heavily, accompanied with the dreary whistling of the wind. The gloom without served but to enhance by contrast the cheerfulness—the sense of snugness within. I was watching my good wife discharge her regular Sunday evening duty of catechising the children, and pleasing myself with the promptitude and accuracy of my youngest child's replies, when the servant brought me up word that I was wanted below. I went down stairs immediately. In the hall just beneath the lamp, sat the ungainly figure of a short, fat, bloated, old Jewess.

"This here lady wishes to see you, sir," said she, rising, with a somewhat tipsy tone and air, and handing to me a small dirty slip of paper, on which was written, "Miss Edwards, No 11, — Court, — Street (3d Floor)." The handwriting of the paper, hasty as was the glance I gave at it, struck me. It was small and elegant, but evidently the production of a weak or unsteady hand.

"Pray what is the matter with this lady?" I inquired.

"Matter, sir? Matter enough, I warrant me! The young woman's not long to live, as I reckon. She's worn out—that's all!" she replied with a freedom amounting to rudeness, which at once gave me an inkling of her real character. "Do you think it absolutely necessary for me to call on her to-night?" I inquired, not much liking the sort of place I was likely to be led to.

"*She* does, I fancy, poor thing—and she *really* looks very ill."

"Is it any sudden illness?"

"No, sir—it's been coming on this long time—ever since she came to live with me. My daughter and I thinks 'tis a decline."

"Couldn't you take her to a dispensary?" said I, doubtfully.

"Marry—you'll be *paid* for your visit, I suppose. Is'nt that enough?" said the woman, with an impudent air.

"Well, well—I'll follow you in a minute or two," said I, opening the street door, for there was something in the woman's appearance that I hated to have in my house.

"I say, sir!" she called out in an under-tone, as I was somewhat unceremoniously shutting the door upon her, "you mustn't be put out of your way, mind, if any of my girls should be about. They're noisy devils, to be sure—but they won't meddle—"

The closing of the door prevented my hearing the conclusion of the sentence. I stood for a few moments irresolute. My duty, however, so far seemed clear, and all minor considerations, I thought, should give way; so I equipped myself quickly, and set out on my walk, which was as unpleasant as wind, rain, and darkness could make it.

I do not see why I should mince matters by hesitating to state that the house in which I found myself, after about ten minutes' walk, was one of ill fame—and that, too, apparently of the lowest and vilest description. The street which led to — Court, was narrow, ill lighted, and noisy—swarming with persons and places of infamous character. I was almost alarmed for my personal safety as I passed them; and, on entering the court, trembled for a valuable repeater I had about me. At that moment, too, I happened to recollect having read, some time before, in a police report, an account of a method of entrapping unwary persons, very similar in circumstances to those in which I found myself at that mo-

ment. A medical man was suddenly summoned to see—he was told—a dying patient; but on reaching the residence of the supposed invalid, he was set upon unexpectedly by thieves, robbed of every thing he had about him, and turned into the street severely, if not dangerously, beaten. A pleasant reminiscence! Concealing, however, my watch as well as I could, and buttoning my great-coat up to the chin, I resolved to persevere, trusting to the protection of Providence. The life of a fellow-creature might really be at stake; and, besides, I was no stranger to scenes of misery and destitution among the lowest orders. — Court was a nest of hornets. The dull light of a single lamp in the middle of it showed me the slatternly half-dressed figures of young women, clustering about the opened doors of every house in the court, and laughing loudly as they occasionally shouted to one another across the court. All this was sickening and ill-omened enough; but I resolved not even yet to give up. No. 11, I found, was the last house in the court; and just as I was going to inquire of a filthy creature squatting on the door-steps, she called out to some one within, “Mother! mother! here’s the doctor come to see Sall!”

Her “mother,” the wretch who had called upon me, presently sauntered to the door with a candle in her hand. She seemed to have been disturbed at drinking; and, a little to my alarm, I heard the gruff voice of a man in the room she had just quitted.

“Please to follow me, sir! This way, sir. The young woman is up stairs. Bett!” she called out, suddenly stopping, and turning around, “come and take this here gentleman’s wet umbrella, and dry it by the fire!”

“Thank you—thank you—I’ll not trouble you; I’ll carry it with me; ’tis not *very* wet,” I replied hastily, as I held it dripping at every step. I did not choose, believe me, to part with what I might never see again. It might too—though God prevent the

occasion!—be a small matter of defence to me, if my fears about the nature of my errand should be verified. The moment, however, that the bedroom door was opened, other emotions than that of apprehension occupied my mind. The apartment was little, if at all, superior to that which I have described in a former paper, as the residence of the Irish family, the O'Hurdles. \* It was much smaller, and infinitely filthier. A candle, that seemed never to have been snuffed, stood on the chimney-piece, beside one or two filthy cups and jugs, shedding a dull dismal sort of twilight over a chair or two, a small rickety chest of drawers, an old hair trunk with the lid broken in, a small circular table, on which was a vial and a tea-cup; and, along the farther extremity of the room, a wretched pallet, all tossed and disordered. There was a tolerable fire burning in a very small grate, and the inclemency of the weather seemed completely excluded by a little window, two-thirds of whose panes were, however, stuffed with rags, paper, &c. I felt disposed, immediately on entering, to remove one of them, for there was a horrid closeness in the room.

"Well, there she is in the bed, poor devil, ill enough, I'll answer for't," said the old woman, panting with the effort of ascending the stairs. Reaching down the candle from the chimney-piece, she snuffed it with her fingers, and set it upon the table; and then after stirring up the fire, she took up the candle she had brought, and withdrew, saying as she went out, "Miss Edwards said she'd rather see you alone, so I'm off, you know. If you want any thing, I dare say you can call out for it; some of the girls will be sure to hear you."

I was happy to be relieved of her presence! When the door had closed upon her, I drew one of the chairs to the bedside, together with the table and

\* "Rich and Poor."

candle, which showed me the figure of a female lying on her back amid the disordered clothes, her black hair stretched dishevelled over the pillow, and her face completely concealed beneath both hands.

"Well, madam, are you in much pain?" I inquired, gently trying, at the same time, to disengage her right hand, that I might both feel her pulse and see her countenance. I did not succeed, however, for her hands were clasped over her face with some little force; and, as I made the effort I have mentioned, a faint sob burst from her.

"Come, come, madam," I continued, in as gentle a tone as I could, renewing the effort to dislodge her hand, "I'm afraid you are in much pain! Don't, however, prevent my doing what little may be in my power to relieve you!" Still her hands moved not. "I am Dr. —; you yourself sent for me! What is ailing you? You need not hide your face from me in this strange way!—Come—"

"There, then!—*Do you know me?*" she exclaimed, in a faint shriek, at the same time starting up suddenly in bed, and removing her hands from her face, which—her hair pressed away on each side by her hands—was turned towards me with an anguished affrighted stare, her features white and wasted. The suddenness and singularity of the action sufficiently startled me. She continued in the same attitude and expression of countenance (the latter most vividly recalling to my mind that of Mrs. Siddons, celebrated in pictures, in the most agitating crisis of her *Lady Macbeth*), breathing in short quick gasps, and with her eyes fixed wildly upon me. If the look did not petrify me, as the fabled head of Medusa, it shocked or rather horrified me beyond all expression, as I gazed at it; for—could my eyes see aright?—I gradually *recognised* the face as one known to me. The cold thrill that passed through me—the sickening sensations I then experienced, creep over me now that I am writing.

"Why—am I right?—ELEANOR!" I exclaimed faintly, my hands elevated with consternation, at the same time almost doubting the evidence of my senses. She made me no reply, but shook her head with frantic violence for a few moments, and then sunk exhausted on her pillow. I would have spoken to her—I would have touched her; but the shock of what I had just seen had momentarily unnerved me. I did not recover my self-possession till I found that she had fainted. Oh, mercy, mercy! what a wreck of beauty was I gazing on! Could it be possible? Was this pallid, worn-out, death-struck creature, lying in such a den of guilt and pollution; was this the gay and beautiful girl I had once known as the star of the place where she resided—whom my wife knew—whom in short we had both known, and that familiarly? The truth flashed in a moment over my shuddering, reluctant soul. I must be gazing on the spoil of the seducer! I looked with horror, not to say loathing, on her lifeless features, till I began to doubt whether, after all, they could really be those I took them to be. But her extraordinary conduct—there could be no mistake when I thought of that.

With the aid of a vinaigrette, which I always carried about with me, and dashing a little cold water in her face, she gradually revived. The moment her slowly-opening eyes fell upon me, she closed them again, turned aside her head with a convulsive start, and covered her face, as before, with her hands.

"Come, come, Miss B——,"—a stifled groan burst from her lips on hearing me mention her real name, and she shook her head with agony unutterable, "you *must* be calm, or I can do nothing for you. There's nothing to alarm you, surely, in me! I am come at your own request, and wish to be of service to you. Tell me at once, now, where do you feel pain?"

"**HERE!**" replied the wretched girl, placing her



left hand with convulsive energy upon her heart. Oh, the tone of her voice! I would to Heaven—I would to Heaven, that the blackest seducer on earth could have been present to hear her utter that *one word*!

“Have you any pain in the other side?” I inquired, looking away from her to conceal my emotion, and trying to count her pulses. She nodded in the affirmative.

“Do you spit much during the day? Any blood, Miss B——?”

“Miss B——!” she echoed, with a smile of mingled despair and grief; “call me rather *Devil*!—Don’t mock me with kind words! Don’t, doctor! No, not a word—a single word—a word,” she continued, with increasing wildness of tone and air. “See—I’m prepared! I’m beforehand! I expected something like this!—Don’t—don’t dare me! Look!” She suddenly thrust her right hand under the bed-clothes, and, to my horror, drew from under them a table-knife, which she shook before me with the air of a maniac. I wrenched it out of her hand with little difficulty.

“Well, then—so—so,” she gasped, clutching at her throat with both her hands. I rose up from my chair, telling her in a stern tone, that if she persisted in such wild antics, I should leave her at once; that my time was valuable, and the hour besides growing late.

“Go—go then! Desert one whom the world has already deserted! Yes, go—go away—I deserve no better—and yet—I did not expect it!” exclaimed the miserable girl, bursting into a flood of bitter but relieving tears. Finding that what I had said had produced its desired effect, I resumed my seat. There was a silence of several moments.

“I—I suppose you are shocked—to—to see me here—but you’ve heard it all,” said she faintly.

“Oh—we’ll talk about that by-and-by; I must

first see about your health. I am afraid you are very ill! haven't you been long so?—Why did not you send for me earlier?—Rely upon it, you need not have sent twice!"

"Oh—can you ask me, doctor?—I dared not!—I wish—oh, how I wish I had not sent for you *now*! The sight of you has driven me nearly mad! You must see that it has—but you did not mean it! Oh!—oh!—oh!" she groaned, apparently half-choked—"what I feel *HERE*!" pressing both her hands upon her heart. "what a *hell*!" quivering forth the last word with an intonation that was fearful.

"Once more—I entreat of you to check your feelings, otherwise it is absurd for me to be here! What good can I possibly do you, if you rave in this manner?" said I sternly. She made no reply, but suddenly coughed violently; then started up in the bed, felt about in haste for her handkerchief, raised it to her lips, and drew it away marked with blood.

She had burst a blood-vessel!

I was dreadfully alarmed for her. The incessant use she made of her handkerchief soon rendered it useless. It was steeped in blood. She pointed hurriedly to the drawers—I understood her—drew one of them open, and instantly brought her a clean handkerchief. That, also, was soon useless. In the intervals of this horrid work she attempted to speak to me—but I stopped her once for all, by laying my finger on my lips, and then addressing her solemnly—"In the name of God, I charge you to be silent! A word—a single word—and you are a dead woman! Your life is in the utmost danger"—again she seemed attempting to speak—"if you utter a syllable, I tell you, it will destroy you; you know the consequences—you will therefore die a *suicide*—and, think of *HEREAFTER*!"

A smile—one I cannot attempt to characterize, but by saying it seemed an unearthly one—flitted for an instant over her features—and she did not seem dis-

posed again to break my orders. I proceeded to bleed\* her immediately, having obtained what was necessary—with great difficulty—without summoning any one for the present into the room. When she saw what I was about, she whispered faintly, with a calm but surprised air—pointing to her steeped handkerchiefs—“What! more *blood*!”—I simply implored her to be silent, and trust herself in my hands. I bled her till she fainted. A few moments before she became insensible—while the deathlike hue and expression of fainting were stealing over her features,—she exclaimed, though almost inaudibly, “Am I dying?”

When I had taken the requisite quantity of blood, I bound up the arm as well as I could, took out my pencil, hastily wrote a prescription on a slip of paper, and called for such assistance as might be within reach. A young woman of odious appearance answered my summons by bursting noisily into the room.

“La!” she exclaimed, on catching a glimpse of the blood, and the pallid face of my patient—“La! sure Sall’s *booked*!”

“Hush, woman!” said I sternly; “take this”—giving her the prescription—“to the nearest drug-gist’s shop, and get it made up immediately; and in the mean time send some elderly person here.”

“Oh—her mother, eh?”

“Her *mother*!” I echoed with astonishment. She laughed, “La, now, you don’t know the ways of these places. We all calls her mother!”

Pity for the miserable victim I had in charge, joined with disgust and horror at the persons about me and the place in which I was, kept me silent, till

\* I have often heard people express astonishment at my bleeding a patient who has already bled profusely from a ruptured vessel. It is with a view to lessening the heart’s action, so as to diminish the volume of blood that it propels through the injured vessel, which may so have an opportunity of healing before it is called upon to perform its full functions.

the woman last alluded to made her appearance with the medicine I had ordered, and which I instantly poured into a cup and gave my patient. "Is the young woman much worse, sir?" she inquired, in an under tone, and with something like concern of manner.

"Yes," I replied, laconically, "she must be taken care of, and that well, or she will not live the night out," I whispered.

"Better take her to the hospital at once, hadn't we?" she inquired, approaching the bed, and eying Miss Edwards with stupid curiosity.

"She is not to be moved out of her bed, at the peril of her life! not for many days—mind, woman, I tell you that distinctly."

"You tell me that distinctly! And what the devil if you do? What, a God's name, is to be done with a sick young woman, here? We've something else to do besides making our house into an hospital!"

I could with difficulty repress my indignation.

"Pray, for pity's sake, my good woman, don't speak so cruelly about this unfortunate girl! Consider how soon you may be lying on your own deathbed—"

"Deathbed, be ——! who's to pay for her keep if she stops here? *I* can't, and what's more, *I* won't, and I defy the parish to make me! But, by-the-way," she continued, suddenly addressing my patient, "Sally, you had money enough a few days ago, *I* know; where is it now?"

"My good woman," said I, gently removing her from the bedside, "do but leave the room for a moment. I will come down stairs and arrange every thing with you." She seemed inclined to be obstreperous. "I tell you, you are *killing* this poor girl!" said I, my eye kindling upon the old monster, with anger. Muttering some unintelligible words of ill-temper, she suffered me to close the door upon her, and I once more took my seat at the bedside. Miss Edwards's face evidenced the agitation with which

she had listened to the cruel and insolent language of the beldam in whose power she for the present lay. I trembled for the effect of it.

"Now, I entreat you, suffer me to have all the talking to myself for a moment or two. You can answer all my questions with a nod, or so. Do you think that if I were to send to you a nice respectable woman—a nurse from a dispensary with which I am connected—to attend upon you, the people of the house would let you remain quiet for a few days, till you could be removed? Nod, if you think so." She looked at me with surprise while I talked about removing her, but she simply nodded in acquiescence.

"If you are well enough by-and-by, would you object to being taken from this place to a dispensary, where I would see to your comfort?" She shook her head.

"Are you indebted to any one here?"

"No, my guilt has paid—" she whispered. I pressed my finger on my lips, and she ceased. "Well, we understand one another for the present. I must not stay much longer, and you must not be exhausted. I shall charge the people below to keep you quiet, and a kind experienced nurse shall be at your bedside within two hours from this time. I will leave orders till she comes, with the woman of the house to give you your medicine, and to keep you quiet, and the room cool. Now, I charge you by all your hopes of life—by all your fears of death—let nothing prevail on you to open your lips, unless it be absolutely necessary. Good evening—may God protect you." I was rising, when she beckoned me into my seat again. She groped with her hand under her pillow for a moment, and brought out a purse.

"Poh, poh! put it away—at least for the present," said I.

"Your fee *must* be paid!" she whispered.

"I visit you as a dispensary patient, and shall assuredly receive no fee. You cannot move me, any

more than you can shake St. Paul's," said I, in a peremptory tone. Dropping her purse, she seized my hand in both hers, and looking up at me with a woful expression, her tears fell upon it. After a pause, she whispered, "Only a single word!—Mrs. —," naming my wife, you will not tell her of me?" she inquired, with an imploring look. "No, I will not!" I replied, though I knew I should break my word the moment I got home. She squeezed my hand, and sighed heavily. I did not regret to see her beginning to grow drowsy with the effect of the medicine I had given her, so I slipped quietly out of the room. Having no candle, I was obliged to grope my way down stairs in the dark. I was shocked and alarmed to hear, as I descended, by the angry voices both of men and women, that there was a disturbance down stairs. Oh, what a place for such a patient as I had quitted! I paused when half-way down, to listen. "I tell you, I *didn't* take the watch," shrieked the infuriate voice of a female. "I'll be — if I did."

"I saw you with it—I saw you with it!" replied a man's voice.

"You're a liar! a — liar!" There was the sound of a scuffle.

"Come, come, my girl! easy there! easy!—Be quiet, or I'll take you *all* off to the watch-house!—Come, Bett, you'd better come off peaceably at once! This here gentleman says as how you've stolen his watch, and so you *must* go of course!"—"I won't! I won't! I'll tear your eyes out! I'll see you all — first! I will," yelled the voice I had first heard, and the uproar increased. Gracious Heaven! in what a place was I! was my wretched patient! I stood on the dark stairs, leaning on my umbrella, not knowing which way to go, or what to do. I resolved at length to go down; and on reaching the scene of all this uproar, found the passage and doorway choked with a crowd of men and women.

"What is the meaning of all this uproar," I ex-

claimed, in as authoritative a manner as I knew how to assume. "For God's sake be quiet! Do you know that there is a young woman dying up stairs?"

"Dying! and what's that to me? They say I'm a thief—He says I've got his watch—he does, the — liar!" shouted the young woman, her dress almost torn off her shoulders, and her hair hanging loosely all about her head and neck, and almost covering her face. She tried to disengage herself from the grasp of a watchman, and struggled to reach a young man, who, with impassioned gestures, was telling the crowd that he had been robbed of his watch in the house. My soul was sick within me. I would fain have slipped away, once for all, from such a horrid scene and neighbourhood, but the thoughts of her I had left above detained me.

"I wish to speak to you for a moment," said I, addressing the old proprietress of the house. "Speak to me, indeed!" she replied, scarce vouchsafing me a look, and panting with rage. "Here's this — liar says he's been robbed here; that one o' my girls is a thief! He's trying to blast the character of my house." And she poured such a volley of foul obscene names upon the object of her fury, as I had scarcely thought it possible for the tongue of man, much less of woman, to utter.

"But, *do* let me have *one* word with you," I whispered imploringly—"the poor girl up stairs—her life is at stake—"

"Here, Moll, do you come and speak to the doctor! I've something else on my hands, I warrant me!" and turning abruptly from me, she plunged again into the quarrel, which I had interrupted.

The young woman she addressed made her way out of the crowd—led me into a small filthy room at the back of the house, and civilly, but with some agitation, arising from her having taken a part in the dispute, asked me what I wanted. "Why, only to

tell you that Miss Edwards is my patient—that I know her—”

“Lord, sir, for the matter of that so do a hundred others—”

“Silence, woman!” said I, indignantly, “and listen to what I am saying. I tell you, Miss Edwards is my patient; that she is in dying circumstances; and I hold you all responsible for her safety. If she dies through being disturbed, or frightened in any way, recollect you will be guilty of murder, and I will witness against you!”

“I’m very sorry for the poor thing, sir—very!” she replied; “she’s the quietest, civilest, best-behaved of any of our ladies, by far! What can we do, sir?”

“Keep the house quiet; do not let her be spoken to—and in an hour’s time, I shall send a proper woman to wait upon her.”

“Lord, sir, but how’s the poor creature to pay you and the woman, too? She’s been laid up, I don’t know how long—indeed ever since she’s been here!”

“That I will see about. All I want from you is to attend to what I have told you. I shall call here early to-morrow morning, and hope to find that my wishes have been attended to. It will be a very serious business for you all, mind me, if they have not. If I do not find this hubbub ceased instantly, I shall, at my own expense, engage a constable to keep the peace here. Tell this to the people without there. I know the magistrate at — street Office, and will certainly do what I say.” She promised respectfully that all I said should be attended to as far as possible; and I hurried from such a scene as it has not often been my lot to witness. I thanked God heartily, on quitting the house and neighbourhood, that I found myself once more in the open air, cold, dark, and rainy though it was. I breathed freely for the first time since entering within the atmosphere of such horrible contamination. A rush of recollections of Miss B——, once virtuous, happy, beautiful;



now guilty, polluted, dying—of former and present times—overwhelmed my mind. What scenes must this fallen creature have passed through! How was it that, long ere this, she had not laid violent hands upon herself—that in her paroxysms of remorse and despair, she had not rushed from an existence that was hateful—hurried madly from the scene of guilt, into that of its punishment! I at once longed for and loathed a possible rehearsal of all. Full of such reflections as these, I found myself at the door of the dispensary. The hour was rather late, and it was with great difficulty that I could find such a person as I had undertaken to send. I prescribed the requisite remedies, and gave them to the nurse with all fitting directions, and despatched her to the scene of her attendance as quickly as possible—promising to be with her as early as I could in the morning, and directing her to send for me without hesitation at any hour of the night, if she thought her patient exhibited any alarming features. It was past eleven when I reached home. I told the reader a little way back, that I knew I should break my promise, that I could not help informing my wife of what had happened. I need hardly say the shock gave her a sleepless night. I think the present the fittest opportunity for mentioning, shortly to the reader, the circumstances under which we became first acquainted with the *soi-disant* Miss Edwards.

Several years before the period of which I have been writing, my wife's health required the assistance of change of scene and fresh country air. I therefore took her down, in the spring of the year, to what was then considered one of the fashionable watering-places, and engaged lodgings for her at the boarding-house of a respectable widow-lady, a little way out of the town. Her husband had been a captain in the East India service, who, as is but too frequent with that class of men, spent his money faster than he earned it; so that on his death nothing but the

most active exertions of numerous friends and relatives preserved his widow and daughter from little less than absolute destitution. They took for Mrs. B—— the house she occupied when we became her lodgers, furnished it with comfort and even elegance; and, in a word, fairly set her a-going as the proprietress of a boarding-house. The respectability of her character, and the comforts of her little establishment, procured for her permanent patronage. How well do I recollect her prepossessing appearance as it first struck me! There was an air of pensive cheerfulness and composure about her features, that spoke eloquently in her favour; and I felt gratified at the thought of committing my wife and family into such good hands. As we were coming down stairs after inspecting the house, through the half-open door of a back parlour I caught a glimpse of an uncommonly handsome and elegantly dressed girl, sitting at a desk reading.

"Only my daughter, sir," said Mrs. B——, observing my eye rather inquisitively peering after her.

"Dear!—how like she is to the pictures of the Madonna!" exclaimed my wife.

"Yes, madam. It is often remarked here," replied Mrs. B——, colouring with pleasure; "and what's far better, ma'am, she's the best girl you'll meet with in a day's walk through a town! She's all I care for in the world!" She added with a sigh. We congratulated ourselves mutually; expressing anticipations of pleasure from our future intercourse. After seeing my family settled in their new quarters, I left for London—my professional engagements not allowing me more than a day's absence. Every letter I received from my wife contained commendations of her hostess, and "the Madonna," her beautiful, accomplished, and agreeable daughter, with whom she had got particularly intimate, and was seldom out of her company. The visits, "like angels", few and far between," that I was able to pay to ——, made Miss

B—— as great a favourite with me as with my wife—as with all that knew or saw her, I might better say. I found that she was well known about the place by the name of “the Madonna;” and was so much pestered with the usual impertinences of dandies, as to be unable to go about so much as she could have otherwise wished. The frank, simple-hearted creature was not long in making a confidante of my wife; who, in their various conversations, heard with but little surprise of frequent anonymous billet-doux, copies of verses, &c. &c., and flattering attentions paid by the most distinguished strangers; and, in one instance, even by royalty itself. She had refused several advantageous offers of marriage, pressed upon her to a degree that was harassing, on the score of her mother, to whom she was passionately attached, and from whom she could not bear the thought of the most partial separation. Her education—her associations—her cast of character—her tastes and inclinations, were far beyond her present sphere. “I once should have laughed, indeed, at any one talking of my becoming the daughter of a lodging-house keeper,” said the proud girl, on one occasion, to my wife, her swan-like neck curving with involuntary hauteur, which, however, was soon softened by my wife’s calm and steady eye of reproof, as she assured her—“Eleanor, I thought it no harm to be such a daughter.” This pride appeared to my wife, though not to me, some security against the peculiar dangers that beset Miss B——.

“She’s too proud—too high-spirited a girl,” she would say, “to permit herself to tamper with temptation. She’s infinitely above listening to nonsense. Trust me, there’s that in her that would frighten off fifty triflers a-day!”

“My view of the matter, Emily, is far different,” I would say. “Pride, unless combined with the highest qualities, is apt to precipitate such a girl into the vortex that humility could never have come

within sight or reach of. Pride dares the danger that lowness trembles at and avoids. Pride must press forward to the verge of the precipice, to show the ease and grace of its defiance. My Emily! merely human confidence is bad—is dangerous—in proportion to its degree. Consider, remember what you have both heard and read of the disastrous consequences attendant on the pride of a disappointed girl!”

The predominant taste of Miss B——, was novel-reading, which engaged her attention every spare hour she could snatch from other engagements. Hence what could she imbibe but false sentiment—what gather, but the most erroneous and distorted views of life and morals? Add to this the consciousness of her own beauty, and the large tribute it exacted from all who saw her—the intoxicating, maddening fumes of flattery—ah, me! I should have trembled for her indeed had she been a daughter of mine! The doting mother, however, seemed to see none of these dangers—to feel none of these apprehensions; and cruel, surely, and impertinent would it have been in us to suggest them. For nearly three months was my wife a guest of Mrs. B——’s, and a familiar—an affectionate companion of her beautiful daughter. On leaving, my wife pressed Miss B—— (the mother was, of course, out of the question) to pay her a speedy visit in town, and exacted a promise of occasional correspondence. Long after our return to London was “the Madonna” a subject of conversation, and many were the anxious wishes and hopes expressed by my wife on her behalf. Miss B—— did not avail herself of the invitation above mentioned, further than by a hasty passing call at our house during the absence of both of us. One circumstance and another—especially the increasing cares of a family—brought about a slackening, and at length a cessation, of the correspondence between my wife and her friend “the Madonna,” though we

occasionally heard of her by friends recently returned from —. I do not think, however, her name was once mentioned for about three years before the period at which this narrative commences. Now I suppose the reader can form some idea of the consternation with which I recognised in “Sally Edwards” the “Madonna” of a former day! The very watch-pockets at the back of our bed were the pretty presents of her whose horrid story I was telling my sobbing wife! I could have torn them from the bed-head, for the sake of their torturing associations! They would not let us sleep in peace. I was startled during the night from a doze rather than from sleep, by the sobs of my wife.

“What’s the matter, Emily?” I asked.

“Oh!” she replied; “*what* has become of poor Mrs. B——! Rely on it, she’s dead of a broken heart!”

For two hours before my usual hour of rising, I lay awake, casting about in my mind by what strange and fatal course of events Miss B—— had been brought into the revolting, the awful circumstances in which I found her. Dreadfully distinct as was the last night’s interview in my recollection, I was not wholly free from transient fits of incredulity. I *could* not identify the two—Eleanor B—— with *Sall Edwards*! All such notions however, were dissipated by nine o’clock, when I found myself once more by the bedside of “Miss Edwards.” She was asleep when I entered; and I motioned the nurse to silence, as I stepped noiselessly towards the chair she quitted to make room for me. Oh, my God! did the heart of man ever ache more than mine on that occasion! Was the pitiable object before me Eleanor B——! Were they *her* fair limbs that now lay beneath the filthy bedclothes? Was the ashy face—the hollow cheek—the sunken eye—the matted, disordered hair—did all these belong to Eleanor B——, the beautiful “Madonna” of a former and happier day! Alas for the

black hair, braided so tastefully over the proud brow of alabaster, now clammy with the dews of disease and death, seen from amid the dishevelled hair like a neglected grave-stone, pressed down into the ground, and half-overgrown with the dank grass of the churchyard! Alas for the radiant eye! Wo is me!—where is the innocent heart of past years! Oh seraph! fallen from heaven into the pit of darkness and horror—how camest thou here!

Faint, vain attempt to embody in words some of the agitating thoughts that passed through my mind during the quarter of an hour that I sat beside my sleeping patient! Tears I did not, could not shed. My grief formed no other outlet than a half-smothered sigh, that ransacked, however, every corner of my heart. Every thing about me wore the air of desolation and misery. The nurse, wearied with her night's watch, sat near me on the foot of the bed, drooping with drowsiness. The room was small, dirty, and almost destitute of furniture. The rain, seen indistinctly through the few dirty panes of glass, was pouring down, as it had been all night. The wind continued to sigh drearily. Then, the house where I was—the receptacle of the vilest of the vile—the very antechamber of hell! When shall I forget that morning—that quarter of an hour's silence and reflection!

And thou, FIEND! the doer of all this—would that thou hadst been there to see it!

A sudden noise made by the nurse waked Miss Edwards. Without moving from the posture in which she lay—on her side, with her face away from me—as she had slept, I found, nearly all the night—she opened her eyes, and after looking steadfastly at the wall for a few moments, closed them again. I gently took hold of her hand, and then felt her pulse. She turned her head slowly towards me; and after fixing her eyes on me for an instant with an air of apathy, they widened into a strange stare of alarm, while her

white face seemed blanched to even a whiter hue than before. Her lips slowly parted—together, I protest my blood chilled beneath what I looked upon. There was no smile of welcome—no appearance of recognition—but she seemed as if she had been waked from dreaming of a frightful spectre that remained visible to her waking eyes.

“Miss B——, Miss Edwards, I mean. How are you?” I inquired.

“Yes—it—it—is—” she muttered, scarcely audible—her eye fixed unwaveringly upon me.

“Have you been in any pain during the night?” I continued.

Without removing her eyes, or making me any answer, she slowly drew up her right hand, all white and thin as it was, and laid it on her heart.

“Ah!” I whispered softly, partly to myself, partly to the nurse, “’tis the opium—not yet recovered from it.” She overheard me, shook her head slowly—her eyes continuing settled on me, as before. I began to wonder whether her intellects were disturbed; for there was something in the settled stare of her eyes that shocked and oppressed me.

“I thought I should never have waked again!” she exclaimed in a low tone, with a faint sigh. “Suicide! *hereafter!*” she continued to murmur, reminding me of the words with which I had quitted her over-night, and which no doubt had been flickering about her disturbed brain all night long. I thought it best to rouse her gently from what might prove a fatal lethargy.

“Come, come, you must answer me a few questions. I will behave kindly to you—”

“Oh, Doctor——!” exclaimed the poor girl, in a reproachful tone, turning her head slowly away, as if she wondered I thought it necessary to *tell* her I would use her kindly.

“Well, well, tell me then—how are you?—how do

you feel?—have you any pain in breathing? Tell me in the softest whisper you can.”

“Alive, doctor—that’s all. I seem disturbed in my grave! What has been done to me?—Who is that?” she inquired faintly, looking at the nurse.

“Oh! she has been sitting by you all night—she has been nursing you.” Miss Edwards opened her hand towards the nurse, who gently shook it. “You are very kind to me,” she murmured; “I—I don’t deserve it.”

“Every one, Miss Edwards, must be attended when they are ill. We want no thanks—it is our duty.”

“But I am such a base girl—”

“Pshaw! you must not begin to talk in that way. Have you felt any fulness—a sort of choking fulness—about your chest, since I saw you last?” She did not seem to hear me, as she closed her eyes, and gave me no reply for several minutes. I repeated the question.

“I—I *can’t* speak,” she sobbed, her lips quivering with emotion.

I saw her feelings overpowered her. I thought it better to leave at once, and not agitate her; so I rose, and entreating the nurse to pay her all the attention in her power, and give her medicine regularly, I left, promising to return, if possible, at noon. Her state was extremely precarious. Her constitution had evidently been dreadfully shattered; every thing, in short, was at present against her recovering from the injury her lungs had sustained from the ruptured vessel. The least shock, the least agitation of her exquisitely excitable feelings might bring on a second fit of blood-spitting, and then all was over. I trembled when I reflected on the dangerous neighbourhood, the disgusting and disease-laden atmosphere she was breathing. I resolved to remove her from it, the instant I could do so with safety, to the dispensary, where cleanliness and comfort, with change of scene, and assiduous medical attendance, awaited



her. My wife was very anxious to visit her, and contribute all in her power towards her double restoration of body and mind; but that of course was impossible as long as Miss Edwards lay in — court.

I need not, however, delay the course of the narrative by dwelling on the comparatively eventless week that followed. I attended my miserable patient on an average twice or thrice a day, and was gratified at finding no relapse; that she even recovered, though slowly, from the fierce and sudden attack that had been made on her exhausted constitution. During this time, as I never encouraged conversation, confining my inquiries to the state of her health, she said nothing either of interest or importance. Her mind was sunk into a state of the most deplorable despondency, evidenced by long, frequent, deep-drawn sighs. I learned from the nurse that Miss Edwards sometimes moaned piteously during the night,—“Oh mother!—mother!—my mother!” She would scarcely open her lips from morning to night, even to answer the most necessary questions. On one occasion, I found she opened a little purse that lay under her pillow, took out a solitary five-pound note, and put it unexpectedly into the nurse’s hands, which she clasped at the same time within her own, with a supplicating expression of countenance, as if begging of her to retain the money. When she found that the nurse was firm in her refusal, she put it back into her purse in silence.—“And your heart would have felt for her,” said the nurse, “if you had seen her sad face!” I need hardly perhaps mention, that she had pressed the little relic of her wretched gains upon me in a similar manner, till she desisted in despair. On Friday morning, as I was taking my leave of her, she suddenly seized my hand, pressed it to her lips, and, with more energy than her feeble state could well bear, gasped,—“Oh, that I could but get out of bed to fall down on my knees before you to thank you!—Oh, it would relieve my heart!”

*Monday, October 15th.*—Yesterday morning I told Miss Edwards that I thought we might venture to remove her to our dispensary on the following day; an intimation she appeared to receive with indifference, or rather apathy. I also informed the infamous landlady of my intention, directing her to furnish me with whatever account she might have for lodging, &c. against my patient. Oh! how my soul abhorred the sight of, and sickened at speaking with, that hideous bloated old monster! This morning I was at — court by ten o'clock. Finding nobody stirring about the door, passage, or stairs, I ascended at once to the room of Miss Edwards. As I was passing the landing of the first floor, I overheard, through a half-open door, the voices of persons conversing together. No apology can be necessary for stating that on distinguishing the words "Sall Edwards," I paused for a moment to listen what plot might be hatching against her.

"I tell you we'd better lose no time," said the voice of a man in a gruff under-tone; "we've been here shilly-shallying day after day to no purpose all the week, till it's nearly too late. I know the — keeps it always under her pillow."

"But that creature he has brought to stop with her," replied a female voice—that of the hateful harridan who owned the house; "what the — are you to do with *her* the while?"

"Slap her face for her—knock her down, and be off—that's my way of doing business. Do you remember old Jenkins, eh?"

There was a faint laugh.

"But why couldn't *you* go up, mother, under pretence of making the bed, and so slip off with the purse?—Now *that* would be doing it snug, as I calls it."

"Lord—I make the bed! You know how Sall hates me; and, besides, what's that woman up stairs for, but to make the bed, and such like? It won't do—no, it won't."

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"Well—I suppose I *must*."

"Then again, Ikey—there's that — officious doctor of hers."

"Oh, of course, he's as much on the look-out after it as we is, for the matter of that! He's waiting to grab the blunt himself! *He* calls it his 'fee!' ha, ha! *We* makes no bones on it, but calls it plain robbery—don't we, mother?"

"But, mother," said a female voice I had not heard before, "remember poor Sall's dying."

"Well, slut," replied the old woman, "and what if she is? Then the loss of a few pounds can't signify, as she's a-going to the 'spensary, where they pays nothing."

"Well, well, mother," resumed the man's voice; "there's not a moment to be lost. I'd better do what I said."

I slipped like lightning down stairs—met nobody—hurried into the street—and instinctively ran towards the police-office, which was not far off. I soon procured the assistance of an officer, with whom I hastened back to — court. On our way I hurriedly explained to him the state of matters, and directed him to continue in Miss Edwards's room till she was removed to the dispensary. When we reached the outer door of the house, I suppose my well-known companion was instantly recognised, for a girl at the door, no doubt on the look-out to see if the coast was clear, no sooner set eyes on him than she rushed back into the passage, followed by the officer and me. As she was setting her foot upon the stairs, the powerful hand of the officer snatched her back again into the passage. She was on the point of shouting out, but he silenced her by fiercely shaking his staff in her face.

"Aha, my lass! Only speak a word, and I'll break your head open!" said he. "Doctor, do you go up at once; and I'll follow you before you've

reached the door. I only want to keep this young woman quiet till then."

I sprang up stairs in an instant. I met no one; but on opening Miss Edwards's door, to my mutterable astonishment, I saw my usual seat by her bedside occupied by a burly ruffian of the lowest order. He seemed sitting quietly enough; though the nurse was speaking to him in great agitation. On my entering the room, he turned round; then suddenly thrust his hand beneath Miss Edwards's pillow and made for the door, with a hasty air of defiance. Before he had reached it the officer on the stairs had thrust it open.

"Stop that man—he has stolen something," said I, in as low a tone as my alarm would allow me; and the officer instantly collared him.

"I stolen something, you — liar!" exclaimed the ruffian, in a low furious tone, turning towards me.

"Come—none of that there jaw, Dick! Be quiet—be quiet, man!" and he presented to him a pistol ready cocked. "Now, will you come down with me quietly?—or will you be carried down with your brains blown out? Quick."

His prisoner appeared preparing for a struggle.

"I'm sorry for the sick lady, sir," said the officer hurriedly to me; "'twill frighten her; but I must fire!"

"For God's sake avoid it if possible," I gasped in the utmost trepidation.

"Now, listen, Dick —," said the officer, furiously tightening his grasp, till his bony knuckles seemed buried in the flesh of his prisoner—"if you stop a moment, — me, but I'll fire at you, come what may!" The pistol was almost touching his ear, and I turned away with horror, expecting every instant to hear the fatal report. I wished to heaven the fellow had taken all the money quietly.

"Why, you devil! would you murder me!" shouted the prisoner, dropping into a passive attitude—"where's your warrant?"

"Here!" replied the officer, pressing his pistol against his prisoner's cheek—"off with you!"

"Oh mercy! mercy! mercy!"—shrieked the voice of Miss Edwards, whom the loud voice of the thief had waked from the deep sleep procured by sedative medicines. She started suddenly up in bed, into a kneeling posture, her hands clasped together—and her face turned towards the group at the door with the wildest terror. I hurried to her side—implored her to be calm—and told her it was nothing but a slight disturbance—that I would protect her.

"Mercy! mercy! murder! mercy!" she continued to gasp, regardless of all I could say to her. The officer had by this time prevailed on his prisoner to quit the room peaceably—calling to me to bolt the door after him, and stay in the room till he came back. In a few moments all was quiet again. I passed the next quarter of an hour in a perfect ecstasy of apprehension. I expected to see a second fit of blood-spitting come on—to hear the vile people of the house rush up to the door, and burst it open. I knew not what to do. I explained to Miss Edwards, as she lay panting in bed, that the man who was taken off had entered the room for the purpose of robbing her of her five pounds.

"I saw—I saw his face!" she gasped—"they say—it is said—he murdered one of the—" she could utter no more, but lay shaking from head to foot. "Will he come back again?" she inquired in the same affrighted tone. By degrees, however, her agitation ceased, and, thank God!—(though I could not account for it)—there was no noise, no uproar heard at the door, as I had apprehended. I gave my patient a few drops of laudanum, in water, to aid in quieting her system; and prayed to God, in my heart, that this fearful accident might not be attended with fatal consequences to her!

The drowsy effects of the laudanum were begin-

ning to appear, when the officer, accompanied by another, gently knocked at the door for admission.

"He's safe enough, now, sir, and we've secured the money," he whispered, as I met him half-way, with my finger on my lips.

"The hackney-coach, sir, is waiting at the door," said he in a low tone—"the coach you ordered from the dispensary, they say. I ask your pardon, sir, but hadn't you better take the lady away at once?—the sooner she leaves such a place as this the better. There may be a disturbance, as these houses swarm with thieves and villains of all kinds, and there are but two of us here to protect you!"

"How is it," said I, "that the people of the house make no disturbance,—that they let you take off your man so easily—?"

"Lord, sir, they durs'n't! They're all at home—but they know us, and durs'n't show their faces. They know 'tis in our power to take them off to the office as accomplices, if we like! But hadn't you better make up your mind, sir, about removing of her?"

True. I stood for a moment considering. Perhaps his advice was the best; and yet could she bear it, after all this agitation? I stepped to the bedside. She was nearly asleep (our conversation had been carried on in the lowest whisper), and her pulse was gradually calming down. I thought it, on the whole, a favourable moment for at least making the attempt. I directed the nurse, therefore, to make the few necessary preparations immediately. In less than a quarter of an hour's time we had Miss Edwards well muffled up, and wrapped in a large cloak. Her few clothes were tied up in a bundle: and the officer carried her down with as much ease as he could an infant. There was no noise, no hurry: and as the coach set off with us, I felt inexpressibly delighted, that at all events I had removed her from the hateful situation in which I had found her. We had not far

to go. Miss Edwards, a little agitated, lay quietly in the nurse's arms, and, on the whole, bore the fatigue of removing better than could have been expected. The coachman drove through the quietest streets he could find: and by the time we stood before the dispensary gates, Miss Edwards had fallen asleep—for, be it remembered, the influence of the recently given laudanum was upon her. On alighting, the nurse helped her into my arms. Poor creature! Her weight was that of a child! Though not a strong man, I carried her across the yard, and up stairs to the room that had been prepared for her, with all the ease imaginable. When I laid her on the bed, her short quick breathing and flushed features, together with her exhausted air, and occasional hysterical starts, made me apprehensive that the agitation and excitement of the last hour or two had done her serious injury. I consoled myself, however, with the recollection, that under the peculiar exigences of the case, we could have pursued no other or better course; and that my unhappy patient was now where she would receive all the attention that could possibly be paid to one in her melancholy situation. As I gazed at her, there seemed fewer traces than before of what she had been formerly. She looked more haggard—more hopelessly emaciated than I had before seen her. Still, however, I did not *despair* of in time bringing her round again. I prescribed a little necessary medicine, and, being much behind-hand with my day's engagements, left, promising to call if possible again in the evening. I comforted myself throughout the day with hopes of Miss Edwards's recovery, of her restoration, even, in some measure, to society—ay, even of introducing once more into the fold this "tainted wether of the flock!"

[*Monday Evening to Saturday—inclusive.*]

Really there does seem something almost magical in the alteration visible in Miss Edwards! I am not the only one that thinks so. Some of her worst

symptoms seem disappearing. Though she eats as little as ever, that little is eaten, she says, with relish. Her voice is not so feeble as it was; the pain in her chest is not so oppressive; her spitting sometimes intermits; the fierce evening fever burns slacker; the wasting night-sweats abate a little. I am not, however, prematurely sanguine about her; I have seen too many of these deceitful rallyings to be easily deluded by them. Alas! I know too well that they may even be looked upon as symptomatic of her fatal disorder! But, courage! *Nil desperandum auspice Deo*: she is in THY hands—I leave her there, and bow!

Then again, may we not hope, in turn, to “minister” successfully “to the MIND diseased”—to “cleanse the foul bosom of that perilous stuff”—which, not removed, will defy all the efforts of human art? Yes, let us hope, “though against hope”—for methinks there is stealing over her features an aspect of serenity, of which they have long been stripped—there are signs of rejoicing in the desert—of gladness in the wilderness and solitary place, and of blossoming in the rose!

Rays of her former sweetness of temper and manner are perceptible—which, with the knowledge of her sufferings, endear her to all around her. She has so won upon the attentive affectionate nurse, that the faithful creature will not hear of her place being supplied by another.

“Well, Eleanor,” said I to her this morning, “I’m delighted to find your pulse and tongue speak so well of you; that the nurse can bear witness to the good night’s rest you have had. I don’t hesitate to say, that if you go on in this way a little longer, I think I can hold out to you strong hopes of recovery.”

“Recovery!” she exclaimed, with a deep sigh, shaking her head, “do you think I am glad to hear it?”

“Dear me,” exclaimed the nurse impatiently, “that’s just the way the young lady keeps on with



all the night and day through ! I tell her 'tis wrong, doctor— isn't it ?”

“ 'Tis always wrong, surely,” I replied, with a serious air, “ to be unthankful to the Almighty for his blessings, especially such as Miss Edwards has received.”

“ Ah, doctor, you wrong me ! I wish you could read my heart, and then tell me how it beats with gratitude towards Him I have so heavily offended ! But why should I recover ? What is there in life for *me* ? Forgive me, if I say, Oh, that Heaven, in its mercy, would let me die now ! I am happy, yes, happy in the prospect of death ; but when I think of *life*, my joy fades suddenly !—”

“ Resign yourself, Eleanor, to the will of God ! He in his infinite wisdom must choose for you life or death ! Learn to obey, with fear and trembling !”

“ But how should I be otherwise than shocked at returning to the world—the scene of my horrible guilt—my black—” she paused, and turned pale. “ Who would not spurn me with loathing ? The worms would turn against me !—Even this kind woman—”

“ La, ma'am—and what of *me* ? Bless you ! do you think *I* hate you ?” interrupted the honest nurse, with tears in her eyes.

“ And, Eleanor—remember : did my wife, at any of the times she has been here—”

“ No ! no ! no !” murmured the poor sufferer, her tears starting—and snatching my hand to her lips—“ forgive me ! but how can I help it !”

“ Don't be distressed, Eleanor—if you should recover—about your future prospects,” said I, as the nurse left the room—“ there *are* ways of securing you a comfortable though perhaps an humble retreat. The bounty of one or two kind individuals—”

“ Doctor—doctor—” she interrupted me : when her emotion would not suffer her to say more.

“ Don't be oppressed, Eleanor—don't over-estimate

a little kindness," said I, thinking she overrated the small services I spoke of. "It will be but little, and that little cheerfully given, among five or six persons—and those ladies—" her emotion seemed to increase. "Well, well—if you dislike so much the sense of obligation, why cannot you lighten it, by trying to contribute a little to your own support? Your accomplishments would easily admit of it."

"Dear doctor—you mistake me!" she interrupted, having regained a measure of calmness—"I could tell you a secret that would astonish you—"

"A secret!" I echoed, with a smile—"Why, what about?"

"I will tell you," said she, looking towards the door, as if apprehensive of interruption. I rose and bolted it.

"I am at this moment, believe me when I say it, worth 3000*l.* and more than that; all—all at my absolute command!"

I stared at her, first with astonishment, then with incredulity; and finally with concern—thinking her intellects disordered. I shook my head, involuntarily, at her.

"Doctor, disbelieve me if you choose," she continued calmly,—“but I am serious. I do not speak, as you seem to imagine, deliriously—No, no! This sum of money is really mine—mine alone; and every farthing of it is in the funds at this moment!"

"Ah!" I interrupted her,—the thought suddenly occurring to me,—“your destroyer baited his hook splendidly—”

All the colour that had mantled her cheeks vanished suddenly, leaving them white as marble. She gazed at me for a few moments in silence—the silence I knew not whether of sorrow or of scorn.

"No," she replied at length, with a profound sigh, closing her eyes with her left hand, "It has never been polluted by his touch; it should perish if it had!"

No, no—it is not the price of my shame! Oh, doctor, doctor! am I then fallen so deeply, lower than I suspected even, in your estimation! Could you think I would sell myself for MONEY?" She said this with more bitterness of tone and manner than I had ever seen in her.

"Well, Eleanor, be calm! Forgive me! I am very sorry I spoke so foolishly and hastily. I did not, however, dream of hurting your feelings!" She continued silent. "Eleanor, don't you forgive me?" I inquired, taking her hand in mine.

"You have not offended me, doctor; you cannot," she replied in tears. "It was the thoughts of my own guilt, my own infamy, that shocked me; but it is over! Oh, it is for such a vile wretch as I—" She ceased suddenly, and buried her face in her hands.

"Doctor," at length she resumed, calmer, though in tears, "I say this large sum of money is mine—wholly mine. It came to me through the death of a cousin at sea; and was left me by my uncle. *They* knew not of the polluted hands it was to fall into!" Again she paused, overpowered with her feelings. "But though I knew it was become mine, could I claim it? A wretch like me? No; the vengeance of God would have blighted me! I have never applied for it: I never will! I have often been starving; driven to the most fearful extent of crime, scarce knowing what I was about; yet I never dared to think of calling the money mine! Guilty, depraved as I was, I hoped that God would view it as a penance, an atonement for my crimes! Oh, God! didst thou, wilt thou now accept so poor, so unworthy a proof of my repentance! Even in dust and ashes it is offered!"

She ceased. My soul indeed felt for her. Poor girl,—what a proof, though a mistaken one, was here of the bitterness, the reality of her contrition and remorse! I scarce knew what reply to make to her.

"I have now, however, made up my mind how to dispose of it; in a manner which I humbly hope will be pleasing to God; and may he accept it at my hands! I wish—" At this moment the returning footsteps of the nurse were heard. "To-morrow—to-morrow, doctor—a long history," she whispered hastily.

I took the hint, opened the door, and the nurse entered. Miss Edwards was much exhausted with the efforts she had made in conversation; and I presently took my leave, reminding her, significantly, that I should see her the next evening. Her concluding words led me to expect a narrative of what had befallen her; but unless she proved much better able than she seemed now to undertake such a painful task, I determined to postpone it.

The next evening convinced me that I had acted imprudently in suffering her to enter into any conversation on topics so harrowing to her spirits. I found she had passed a very restless, disturbed night; and one or two painful symptoms reappeared during the day. I resolved, for a long time to come, to interdict any but medical topics; at least, till she could better sustain excitement. Acting on this principle, little of interest transpired during any of the almost daily visits I paid her for the long period of eleven weeks. I persevered in the most anxious efforts, which I also enjoined on all about her, to supply her mind with cheerful topics, in the shape, chiefly, of works of innocent entertainment, chess, sewing, &c. &c.; any thing, in short, that could give her mind something to prey upon, instead of itself.

But let me here make devout and thankful mention of the inestimable support and comfort she received in the offices of that best, nay, that only solace of the bed of sickness and death—RELIGION. Let me also bear testimony here to the honourable and unwearyed exertions in her behalf made by the intelligent and pious chaplain of the institution. If he be now

alive, and I have no reason for supposing he is not, I know he will feel that satisfaction in reflecting upon the services this narrative must call to his recollection, if he see it, which not even the most flattering and public acknowledgment can supply to him. He watched over her with a truly pastoral care, an untiring zeal, that found its reward in bringing her to a full sense of her mournful condition, and in softening her heart to the hallowing and glorious influences of Christianity. He was at her bedside almost every other day, during the long interval I have mentioned. She several times received the sacrament; and though she was more than once unexpectedly brought to the very margin of the grave, her confidence was not shaken. Truly, in the language of Scripture, "a new heart was given unto her." On one occasion of her receiving the sacrament, which she did with all the contrition and humility of Mary Magdalen of old, I heard from Mr. W—— that she was so overcome, poor girl, as that, in the very act of taking the cup into her hand, she burst out into hysteric weeping. The excitement increased; he described her features as wearing an expression of all but sublimity; and she presently burst into a strain of the most touching and passionate eloquence.

"Oh, Saviour of the world," she exclaimed, her hands clasped in an attitude of devotion, and her eyes fixed upwards, "for my polluted lips to kiss thy blessed feet! that thou shouldst suffer me to wash them with my tears! Oh, to stand behind thee, to hear thee forgive me all! Yes, to hear thee speak! To feel that thou hast changed me! Thou hast gone into the wilderness; thou hast sought out the lost sheep, and brought it home with rejoicing! Let me never wander from thee again! My heart breaks with thankfulness! I am thine! Do with me as thou wilt."

Nor were such expressions as these the outpourings of mere delirium—rant, uttered in a transient fit

of enthusiasm—but indications of a permanently altered state of feeling. Surely, call it what you will—enthusiasm, delirium, rant, canting—if it produce such effects as these, it must be blessed beyond all description; and, Father of the spirits of all flesh! vouchsafe unto *me*, when in the awful agonies of passing from time into eternity—into Thy presence—oh, wilt thou vouchsafe to *ME* *such* enthusiasm, *such* delirium!

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The little attentions my wife paid Miss Edwards in calling with me to see her; and sending her, from time to time, such delicacies as her circumstances required, called forth the most enthusiastic expressions of gratitude. My pen can do no justice to the recollections that force themselves upon me of her constant overflowing thankfulness—of the peace and cheerfulness she diffused around her, by the unwavering serenity and resignation with which she bore her sufferings. She persisted in expressing her conviction that she should not recover; that she was being carried gently, not flung with headlong horror, into eternity. If ever a gloomy shadow would pass over her mind, and blanch her features, it was when her mind suddenly reverted to the dreadful scenes from which she had been so providentially rescued. The captive could not look back with wilder affright upon the tortures of the Inquisition, from which he was flying in unexpected escape, his limbs yet quivering with recollections of the rack!

It was an evening in March, in the ensuing year, that was appointed by Miss Edwards for communicating to me the particulars of her history—of her sufferings and her shame. She shrunk from the dreadful task—self-imposed though it was—saying, the only satisfaction she should experience in telling it, would be a feeling that it was in the nature of an expiation of her guilt. I had promised the preceding day to spend a long evening with her for the

purpose of hearing her story. I arrived about half-past six o'clock, and the nurse, according to her instructions, immediately retired.

I wish the reader could have seen Miss Edwards as I saw her on that evening! She reclined, propped up by pillows, upon a couch that had been ordered for her, and which was drawn near the fire. In the beautiful language of Sterne, "affliction had touched her appearance with something that was unearthly." Her raven-black hair was parted with perfect simplicity upon her pale forehead; and the expression of her full dark eyes, together with that of her pallid, wasted features, and the slender, finely-chiselled fingers of the left hand, which was spread open upon her bosom, reminded me forcibly of a picture of the "Madonna," by one of the greatest old painters. I defy any person to have seen that unfortunate girl's face, even in total ignorance of her history, and ever to have forgotten it. On my entering the room, she laid aside a book she had been reading, and seemed, I thought, a little fluttered, aware of my errand—of the heavy task she had undertaken. I apprise the reader at once, that I fear I can give him but a very imperfect account of the deeply-interesting narrative which I received from Miss Edwards's lips. I did not commit it to paper till about a week after I had heard it, circumstances preventing my doing it earlier. I have, however, endeavoured to preserve throughout as much of her peculiar turns of expression—sometimes very felicitous—as possible.

"Doctor," said she, speaking faintly at first, "how I have longed for, and yet dreaded, this day!" She paused, unable to proceed. I rang for a glass of wine and water; and after she had taken a little, her agitation gradually subsided.

"Take time, Eleanor," said I gently—"don't hurry yourself. Don't tell me a syllable more than is perfectly agreeable to yourself. Believe me—believe

me, I have no impertinent curiosity, though I *do* feel a profound interest in what you are going to tell me."

She sighed deeply.

"But, doctor, the blessed Scriptures say, that if we *confess* our sins—" the poor girl's voice again faltered and she burst into tears. I was affected and embarrassed—so much so that I hesitated whether or not I should allow her to go on.

"Forgive me, doctor," she once more resumed, "if I am shocked at finding myself beginning my bitter and disgraceful history. I do it in the spirit of a most humble confession of my errors. It will relieve my heart, though it may make you hate the poor fallen creature that is talking to you. But I know my days on earth are numbered."

"Eleanor! don't say so; I assure you I have great hopes—"

"Doctor—forgive me," said she emphatically, waving her arm with a serious air; "I do not doubt your skill; but I shall never recover; and if it be the will of God, I would a thousand times rather die than live!—Oh, doctor! I find I must begin with the time when you saw me both happy and virtuous, living with my mother. How little did I then think of what was before me!—how differently you were hereafter to see me! Perhaps I need scarcely tell you that my heart in those days was rank with pride—a pride that aided me in my ruin! My poor mother has often, I dare say, told you of the circumstances which led her to seek a livelihood by keeping a boarding-house at a summer watering-place. I endured the change of circumstances; my mother reconciled herself to them—and a thousand times strove, but in vain, to bend the stubborn heart of her daughter into acquiescence with the will of Providence. I concealed my rebellious feelings, however, out of pity to her; but they often choked me! They said, doctor, that at that time I was beautiful. Yes, doctor, look at me now," said she with a bitter



smile, "and think that I was once called beautiful!—Beautiful!—oh! that this face had been the ugliest of the ugly—frightful enough to scare off the Serpent!—But Heaven is wise! I am not vain enough to hesitate about owning that I saw how much I was admired—and admired sometimes in quarters that made my pulse beat high with ambitious hopes—hopes framed in folly, and to be, I need hardly say, bitterly disappointed. I read daily, in the hateful novels which helped to unsettle my principles, of beauty alone procuring what are called high marriages; and would you believe, doctor—foolish girl that I was—I did not despair of becoming myself the wife of a man of rank—of wearing a coronet upon my brow!—Oh! my guilty heart aches to think of the many worthy and admirable young men who honoured me with proposals I spurned with scorn—with insolence. If reason—if common sense had guided me—had I rather listened to the will of Heaven, uttered through the gentle remonstrances and instructions of my poor mother—I might have been, to this hour, a blooming branch upon the tree of society, and not a withered bough soon to fall off—but not—oh no, my gracious God and Father!—not into the burning!" exclaimed Miss Edwards, her voice faltering, and her eyes lifted up towards heaven with a kind of awful hope. "I need not weary you with describing the very many little flattering adventures I met with; and which, alas! I met with too often to allow of the common duties of life being tolerable to me. Your lady, doctor, in happier times would listen to them, and warn me not to be led away by them.

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"But let me come at once to the commencement of my woes. You may recollect the pleasant banks of the —? Oh, the happy hours I have spent there! I was walking, one Sunday evening, along

the river-side, reading some book—I now forget what—when I almost stumbled against a gentleman who was similarly engaged. He started back a step or two—looked at me earnestly for a moment—and, taking off his hat, with a high-bred air, begged my pardon. He looked so hard at me that I began to fancy he knew me. I coloured—and my heart beat so quick and hard, that I could hardly breathe; for I should, indeed, have been blind not to see that my appearance struck him; how *his* affected *me* let the remainder of my life from that hour tell in sighs and groans of anguish! He was the handsomest man I think I have ever seen. He seemed about thirty years old. There was something about his face that I cannot express; and his voice was soft—his manners were kind and dignified. Indeed, indeed it was the hour of fate to me! He said something about ‘blaming not each other for the interruption we had experienced, but the authors whose works kept us so intently engaged,’ in such a gentle tone, and his dark eyes looking at me so mildly, that I could not help listening to him, and feeling pleased that he spoke to me. I begged that he would not blame himself, and said he had done nothing to apologize for. He said not another word on the subject, but bowed respectfully, and talked about the beautiful evening—the silence—the scenery—and in such language! so glowing, so animated, so descriptive, that I thought he must be a poet. All the while he was speaking there was a diffident distance about him—a sort of fear lest he was displeasing me, that charmed me beyond what I could express, and kept me rooted to the spot before him.

“‘I presume, madam, as you are so fond of water-side scenery,’ said he, ‘you often spend your evenings in this way!’”

“I replied that I often certainly found my way there.

“‘Well, ma’am,’ said he with a sweet smile, ‘I

cannot think of interrupting you any longer. I hope you will enjoy this lovely evening.'

"With this he took off his hat, bowed very low, and passed on. If he had but known how sorry I was to see him leave me! I felt fascinated. I could not help looking behind me to see him, and, to be sure, caught him also looking towards me. I would have given the world for a decent pretence for bringing him to me again! My heart beat—my thoughts wandered too much to admit of my reading any more; so I closed my book, sat down on the white roots of a great tree that overshadowed the river, and thought of nothing but this strange gentleman. I wondered who he was—for I had never seen him before in the place, and teased myself with speculations as to whether he really felt towards me any thing further than towards a mere stranger. I went home. I sat down to the piano, where I began twenty different things, but could finish none of them. My mother wished me to write a letter for her; I obeyed, but made so many mistakes that she got angry, and wrote it herself after all. All night long did I think of this fascinating stranger. His soft voice was perpetually whispering in my ear; his bright piercing eyes were always looking at me. I waked almost every half-hour, and began to think I must be surely, as they say, *bewitched*. I got quite alarmed at finding myself so carried away by my feelings. Can you believe all this? You may call it love at first sight—any thing you choose. Would to Heaven it had been *hatred* at first sight! That evening fixed a spell upon me. I was driven on I do not know how. I could not help taking a walk the next evening. It was nonsense, but I must needs take my book with me. My heart beat thick whenever I saw the figure of a gentleman at a distance; but I was disappointed, for he whom I looked for did not come that evening. The next evening, and the one after that, foolish woman that I was,

did I repair with a fluttering heart to the same spot—but in vain—the stranger did not make his appearance. On the Sunday evening, however, I unexpectedly met him, arm in arm with another gentleman. Gracious Heaven! how pale and languid he looked, and his right arm in a sling! He bowed—smiled rather pensively at me—coloured a little I thought—and passed me. I found soon afterward that a duel had been fought in the immediate neighbourhood, on Tuesday last, the day but one after the meeting I have described, between a Lord — and Captain —, in which the latter was wounded in the arm. Yes—then there could be no doubt—it was Captain — whom I had talked to. And he had been in a duel! Oh, doctor, I dropped the newspaper which told me the circumstance. I trembled, I felt agitated as if he had been, not a stranger, but a relative. There was no concealing the truth from myself. I felt sick and faint, at the thought of the danger he had been exposed to: and such an interest in him altogether, as I could not describe. Doctor—fool, wretched, weak fool that I was—already I loved him. Yes, an utter stranger—one who had never given me even a look or word beyond the commonest complaisance! The absurd notions I had got from novels came into my head. I thought of fate, and that it was possible our feelings were mutual—with much more nonsense of the same sort. I was bewildered all day, and told my mother I felt poorly. Poor, good, deceived mother! she was for having *advice* for me!

“Two or three evenings after, we met again. My heart melted to see his pale features, his languid air. Somehow or another—I forget how—we got again into conversation; and I at once taxed him with having fought a duel. What, oh what could have prompted me? He blushed, and looked quickly at me, with surprise but not displeasure; saying in a low tone, something or other about his ‘pride at being an object of my sympathy.’ Doctor —, I can but again and again ask you to bear with me in this history

of my guilt and folly ! Before we parted, I was actually imprudent enough to accept his arm. We often met at that spot afterward, and by appointment. I was enchanted with my new companion, there was something so elegant, so fashionable, so refined about him. I found he was an officer in a regiment of cavalry, and staying at —, on account of ill health. He must have been blind, indeed, not to have seen that I doted—yes, sigh, doctor !—that I doted upon him ; but when I was one evening infatuated, mad enough to beg him *not to appear to know me* if he should happen to meet me walking with my mother, or any one else, you will surely believe that I must have been possessed by Satan ! The moment the fatal words were out of my mouth, I snatched my arm out of his, started back, and turned very pale and faint. I am sure I must—for he instantly asked me with alarm if I was ill. Ill ! I was ready to sink into the earth out of his sight ! His winning ways, however, soon made me forget all—forget even, alas, alas ! that I now stood fatally committed to him ! When I returned home, I felt oppressed with a guilty consciousness of what I had done. I could not look my mother in the face. I felt stupified at recollecting what I had said, but with great effort concealed all from my mother. It is needless to say, that after this Captain — and I met on the footing of lovers ; I expecting him on each occasion to propose marriage ; and he walking by my side, talking in a strain that set my soul on fire with passionate admiration for him. What a charming, what a delightful companion ! Forgetting for a moment all the nonsense of novels, I felt I could have adored him, and made him my husband, had he been the poorest of the poor ! When he was not with me, he would write me sometimes two or three letters a day—and such letters ! If you—even you, had seen them, you would have owned how unequal was the struggle ! At length I felt piqued at his hesitation, in not saying something

decisive and satisfactory on the subject that was nearest my heart: but on the very morning when I thought I had made up my mind to tell him we must part, for that I should get myself talked of in the town, and alarm my mother—he saved me all further anxiety, by telling me in enthusiastic terms that he felt he could not live without me, and asked me if I had any objection to a private marriage; adding, that his father was a haughty, selfish man, and all the other falsehoods that have ruined—and alas, alas! will yet ruin, so many wretched girls! Wo, wo, wo is me that I listened to them—that I believed all—that, indeed, Captain —— could have scarce said any thing I would not have believed! I must have been, alas! given over to destruction, not to understand—never once to reflect on the circumstance of his refusal ever to come to our house to see my mother, or allow me to breathe a hint about what had passed between us! Alas, had but a daughter's heart glowed with a thousandth part of the love towards her mother with which that mother's yearned towards *her*—a moment's sigh—an instant's confidence—would have broken the charm—would have set me free from the spoiler! 'I must keep my old father in the dark about this matter, as you your mother, Eleanor,' said he, 'till the marriage is over, and then they cannot help themselves!' He talked to me in this strain for nearly a month; for my better angel helped me to fight against him so long—flashing incessantly before me the figure of my poor, precious, heart-broken mother—and I refused to listen to his proposals. But at last he prevailed. He talked me to death on the subject; persuaded me, that if I would elope, I could leave a letter, telling my mother how soon she would see me the wife of Captain ——; and at last I began to think in the same way.

" 'Dear, dear Captain —— how much I am trusting to you!' said I one night, weeping, after he had wrung a reluctant consent from me. 'Oh, don't,

don't bring down my poor mother's gray hairs with sorrow to the grave!"

"My dear, dear, good girl!" he exclaimed, folding me fondly in his arms, and kissing me in a sort of transport. I felt then confident of my safety! That very evening did I write the proposed letter to my mother, telling her of all. Oh how I tried to crowd my whole heart into every word! My colour went and came—my knees shook—my hands trembled—my head swam round—I felt cold and hot by turns. I got the letter written, however, and stepped into bed—a sleepless one you may imagine. That night—that very night—I dreamed a dream that might have saved me: that I looked out of bed, and saw a beautiful but venomous snake gliding about under the chest of drawers, near the windows. It shocked me as I gazed shudderingly at it, but I did not once think of Captain ——. Alas, I have since!

"The next day, my injured unsuspecting mother had fixed for paying a visit to a friend who lived some few miles off, from whence she would not return till the day after. Monster—monster—perfidious creature that I was! I chose the first night that my mother and I had been separated for years—the time when she had left all in my care—to forsake her and home, to elope at midnight with my destroyer in a coach and four for Gretna Green! We set off—oh that horrible night—that—" Here Miss Edwards turned suddenly deadly pale. Her manner had for some time shown increasing agitation, though she spoke with undiminished energy till she uttered the last words.

"I cannot suffer you to proceed any further this evening, Eleanor," said I, forcing on her some wine and water; "your efforts have exhausted you!"

She nodded, and attempted to speak, but her voice failed her.

"To-morrow shall I come, if you find yourself better?" She nodded acquiescence. I called in the

nurse immediately, ordered some little quieting medicine for Miss Edwards, and left the nurse to prepare her for bed.

I have omitted much that she told me—much that might have added to the powerful effect her simple and touching mode of telling it might have produced upon the reader, had I given it entire—lest I should fatigue his attention.

The next evening found us again together as on the preceding. I entreated her not to resume her narrative, if it were painful to her—observing her in tears when I entered.

“Yes, doctor—indeed I am pained; but, let it wring my heart as it may, I must go on with the black story I have commenced. Do but be prepared to hear with forgiveness much that will shock you—that will make you look on me with loathing—no, no then—I will say, pity!

“I cannot pain you with a particular account of the means by which my destroyer succeeded in effecting my ruin. Once in the accursed travelling-carriage, we went, I afterward found, in a far different direction to that of Gretna Green. I think I must have been mad throughout the journey. I recollect nothing distinctly; all seems yet in a mist—a mist of excitement, of mingled apprehension and delight. Captain —— was all tenderness, all persuasion. He kept me in a constant whirl. He never suffered me to be left alone for an instant—to think of what I was doing. No—that was not his plan! For two days, I do not think I had leisure to look back, and reflect on what I had left. I felt—strange, dreadful to say—no uneasiness. Oh, my very heaven was to be in the company of Captain ——, to look at him, to hear him speak to me, to think he was now *mine*, mine for life! But on the morning of the third day—” here she shuddered from head to foot, and paused—“I awaked in a fright; for I had been dreaming about the serpent I had dreamed of before we



eloped. Then it glided about under the drawers at a distance; now it was writhing about on the very bed on which I lay! The vividness of my dream waked me, as I said, in horror. Alas, my eyes were opened! BESIDE me lay the serpent!

"I shrieked aloud—I sprang out of bed—I tore my hair with frantic gestures. He leaped out after me in consternation, and attempted to pacify me, but in vain. My cries brought an elderly, respectable female into the room. He told her that 'his wife' was only in hysterics—that I was unfortunately subject to them. I recollect nothing more distinctly of that dreadful day. By the next, with Belial cunning and persuasion, he had soothed and flattered me into something like my former insensibility to my situation. I felt as if it was useless to resist his influence! Before the week was over, we were in Paris. Not all the myriad gayeties of that place, however, could lull or distract the worm from gnawing at my heart! For three weeks I was incessantly in tears—often in hysterics. Captain —— behaved to me with exquisite tenderness. He spent immense sums in procuring me amusement; and, in a moment longer, I found—spite of myself—my sorrow wearing off. He had accustomed me gradually to wine, and at length he was obliged to check my increasing propensity to it with anger. Once—once only, do I recollect having mentioned the sacred name of my mother. He presently produced me a letter, which he pretended to have received from a friend at ——, where I had lived; which said that my mother, on finding out what I had done, burnt the letter I had left for her—cursed me—called me by an infamous name, and vowed solemnly never to receive or acknowledge me again. How I recollect one sentence he read me!

"The old woman goes on much as usual, only very furious when her daughter's name is mentioned.

She says, as the slut has made her bed, so she must lie upon it!"

"How—oh, how could I be for an instant deceived by such a shallow—such an infamous fabrication! I know not; strange as it may seem, I *wished* to think it true, to pacify myself—to blunt the horrid sting of remorse. The Devil, too, had blinded me!

"From that time I began to find my feelings dulled, and got in a manner satisfied with my situation. I had talked about *marriage* till he almost struck me in his fury; and I got wearied and frightened out of my importunities. We spent some time on the banks of the beautiful Rhine, and travelled over the most delicious parts of Switzerland; after which we returned again to Paris. Altogether, we spent about seven months in France. Towards the latter part of that time, stupified as I was, I discovered a gradual but melancholy change in his manner towards me. He seemed trying, I thought, to disgust me with him! He introduced to our table some English friends of his, noblemen and others, and did not seem to care how pointedly they paid their attentions to me, nor how I received them. Then he began to get piqued at my 'impropriety,' he said. That gave him a handle of offence against me. Our life was one of incessant bickering. He began to talk about his leave of absence having expired—that he must return to England. He told me, at length, abruptly, that he had but ten days longer to continue in France, as his regiment was unexpectedly ordered off for India, and I must return to England with him instantly. Return to England! The thought was horror! The day before that fixed for our return to England I eloped with Lord —, an extravagant, dissipated, but handsome young man; and we bent our course towards Rome. There I did indeed blazon my shame. I was allowed whatever dress—whatever ornaments I chose to order. I quite shone in jewelry, till I attracted universal attention. Alas,

too well I knew the answer given to the perpetual inquiry, 'Who is she?' Bear with me, kind doctor—bear with me in my guilty story, when I tell you that in less than three months I quitted Lord —, for the society of an Italian nobleman; his, for that of a French count—and there I shall pause!

"Within two years of my first arrival in France, I found myself in Paris, alone. Ill health had considerably changed my appearance, and of course unfitted me, in a measure, for the guilty splendours of the life I had been leading. My spirits had fallen into the lowest despondency; so that Sir —, the man with whom I had last lived, quitted me in sudden disgust, with not more than a hundred pounds in my pocket—to manage as I could for myself.

"I lived alone at Paris for nearly three weeks, doing little else than drink wine and take laudanum. Then I began to long for England, though I dreaded to see it. The flutter of my heart almost choked me when I thought of home.

"Restless as an evil spirit, I knew not what to do with myself, or whither to go. Still something drew me to England, and accordingly I abruptly left France, and arrived at London in December. In the packet I happened to meet a gentleman I often met at Captain —'s table. Careless and stupified, I heeded not what I did; so he had but little difficulty in persuading me to accept his lodgings in London as mine. I lived with him about a month. Is not all this frightful, doctor?" exclaimed Miss Edwards, abruptly. I shook my head and sighed.

"Yes!" she resumed, echoing my sigh from the very depths of her bosom; "it is an awful catalogue of crime indeed; but let me hasten through it, doctor, while I have strength, for I sicken with the story.

"When I was left alone in London, my spirits grew more and more depressed. I felt sinking into what is called melancholy madness. I went one evening to Drury-lane Theatre, almost stupified

with wine, which I had been drinking alone, for I should really have destroyed myself but for the excitement of wine. I need hardly say to what part of the boxes a young woman, elegantly dressed, and alone, was ushered. It was that allotted to my miserable sisters in guilt. I sat at the corner of the boxes, a large shawl almost concealing me from head to foot. The orchestra was playing the overture. Oh, how sick, how faint that music made me, which all others listened to with ecstasy. It was of a pensive description, sad, but sweet beyond imagination; and it affected me so powerfully, that I was obliged to rush from the place, and seek fresh air. I returned in about half an hour. The vast house had completely filled while I was away; all was light and splendour; and the merry audience was shaking with laughter at the scenes of a favourite comedy. I—I could not laugh, but rather scream with the agonizing intensity of my feelings.

“ ‘La, how she sighs!—Mighty fine, to be sure,’ exclaimed a rude wretch that sat beside me glaring in finery. My heart drooped under the insult. I could not resent it. I gazed languidly at the happy people occupying the private boxes. How I envied them! In casting my eye round them, it fell on a party in that nearest but one to me. Gracious God! it was Captain — with three ladies, one of them very beautiful; and he was paying her the most anxious attentions.

“I remember no more till I found myself, early in the morning, in bed at my lodgings, attended by a girl in fine clothes. I then found, on inquiry, that I had suddenly fallen back on the floor of the boxes in a swoon, and was immediately carried out, attended by a girl that sat near me, who, having found by a paper in my pocket where I lived, brought me home. The woman of the house insisted on my quitting it immediately. I owed her no rent; ‘But that was all one,’ she said; ‘I was a slut, and must be off!’

The girl I spoke of refused to leave my room till I had a little recovered; and easily persuaded me to accompany her to her lodgings. I had about 30*l.* with me, and a few articles of elegant and expensive dress. I lay in bed at my new residence for two days, without once rising; and no words can tell the horror that was upon me! At the end of that time my companion prevailed upon me to accompany her to the play—whither, half-intoxicated, I went. But I cannot pause over the steps by which I hurried on to the vilest excesses of infamy. My money exhausted—all the dress, except what I wore, pawned; what was to become of me? With the wages of shame and sin I strove madly to drink myself to death: yes, doctor, to death! I tried to live hard, that my health might fail—that I might die, if it were the death of a dog. I was soon obliged to leave my companion in guilt. She was more dreadfully addicted to drinking even than I; and in one of her sudden phrensies abused me, and at last struck me a blow with a decanter, that felled me in an instant, stunned and bleeding, to the floor. See, doctor, I have the mark of it!” said Miss Edwards, pushing aside her hair, and disclosing a large scar over the corner of her left forehead.

“You may wonder, doctor, that I have said so little about my mother; but must not suppose that I *thought* little of her. Her injured image was always before my eyes, and served but to drive me into deeper despair. My own shame and misery were tolerable indeed, when I thought of what her sufferings must be! I never dared to make any inquiries about her. How, indeed, could I? Suddenly, however, I resolved, I knew not why—for the thought came over me like a flash of lightning—to go down to —, come what would—to see her if possible, in disguise, without her knowing me. I exchanged my gay clothes with a poor woman of the town for her wretched rags; painted my face, concealed all my

hair under my bonnet: and, with little more than money enough to pay my coach-hire down—careless about the means of coming up—got upon the — coach, by night.

“It rained, and blew cruelly cold—but I had no umbrella—no protection against the weather, but an old worn-out green cloak, that was comparatively useless to me. No one on the coach—indeed there were but three besides myself—would speak to such a wretched object as I looked, or offer me additional clothing! By five o’clock, in the morning of the 10th of February, 18—, at about two miles’ distance from the town, I told them to set me down. I was so numb with cold that I could scarcely keep my feet, till I found my way to a very small ale-house by the roadside, where I called for gin, and drank off two glasses of it. Indeed, by-the-way, you would be horrified to know how I had accustomed myself to the use of raw spirits! Without waiting, I hastened onward. It was dark and dismal, truly. The rain and the bitter wind chilled my very heart within me, but I saw—felt—heard—thought of nothing but my wretched—my heart-broken mother. It was nearly seven o’clock when I entered the town. How my guilty, wearied heart beat as I recognised the places about me! I drew my bonnet over my face—fearful lest, disguised as I was, I should by any chance be recognised—and skulked, like a thief, towards the street in which our house stood. I was often obliged to stop and lean against the walls and railings, to rest my aching limbs. At length I neared the dreaded spot. I looked—I strained my eyes, till they ached. Alas! what was once *our* house was now a shop, newly painted, with a strange name in great glaring gold letters over the bow-window. Oh my God! what feelings shot through my quivering heart at that moment! I sat down upon the wet steps of a house nearly opposite. I wrung my hands—I bit my lips with the intensity of my anguish—for I was

afraid of alarming the yet sleeping neighbourhood with a shriek. At length an old man came slowly past, leading a horse. I asked him, with a faltering voice, where Mrs. — (my mother) lived? He was deaf—and I was obliged to shout the name into his ear—though the effort seemed to exhaust all the little breath I had.

“ ‘Oh—Mrs. —? why—let me see! Her whose daughter ran off with the officer some time since?’ ”

“ I nodded, though my eyes could no longer distinguish the person I was speaking to.

“ ‘Why—poor old lady—she’s been dead this year and a half—’ ”

“ I heard no more. I did not faint—I did not fall—I did not utter a sound—but while he was speaking, walked away steadily and rapidly. My body seemed to swell as I went on. I felt as if I hardly touched the ground. Strange lights were before my eyes. My head seemed whirling round and round. As I walked in this strange way, a coach passed me. I stopped it—found it was going up to London, and got on at once.

“ ‘Going all the way up to London, young woman?’ said the gruff guard.

“ I told him I was—and spoke not a word more, till we reached the coach-office in London. I had no money about me except a shilling or two, and the fare was a pound. They helped me off the coach; and when they found I could not pay my fare, abused me dreadfully—called me an impostor—and handed me over to a constable, who took me to the police-office as a swindler. The magistrate, who was just leaving, soon disposed of the case. The coachman made his charge; and the magistrate sternly inquired how I dared to act so dishonestly? I fell down on my knees, scarce knowing where I was, or what I was doing. He looked hard at me, and seemed to pity me.

“Is it worth while to press for sentence on such a wretched creature as this ?” he said, and flung me a small piece of silver. I fell down at full length on the floor, with a faint scream ; and was in an hour or two sent off to the hospital. There I lay for six weeks, ill of a brain fever, which had several times nearly put an end to my wretched existence. When I was discharged, I had nothing to put on, and no home to go to. At the same time another young woman left the hospital ; who, seeing my utter destitution, invited me home with her, for at least a day, till I could turn myself about. She conducted me to a regular house of infamy ! I wrote immediately to a gentleman who had promised to send me money whenever I asked him. It was my first application, and was successful. He sent me 10*l.* immediately, begging me not to write to him any more.—Shall I go on !

“With part of this sum I purchased gay clothes, and commenced—yes, the accursed life of a common prostitute ! I seemed altogether changed since my visit to —, and my illness in the hospital. My poor mother now dead—murdered—murdered by her vile daughter—I had scarce a relation in England that I knew of. Society I was shut out from for ever. I lived in a state of mind that I cannot describe ; a sort of calm desperation—quite indifferent what became of me—often wishing that I might drop down dead in the streets. I seldom passed three hours in the day sober ; every farthing of money I could procure was instantly changed for the most scorching *spirits* ! But I will not torture you with describing the life I led for a year after this ; it was that of a devil ! A few things, however, I may mention. As I was standing at the box-entrance of the theatre one night, in company with several other women like myself, I unexpectedly saw Captain —, handing a splendidly-dressed lady out of a carriage. Without my wishing it—before, indeed, I was aware of it, his eye fell upon



me, and he knew me. He turned ghastly pale; and was obliged to return back into the carriage with the lady, his wife I suppose, and drive home. Perhaps he thought I should make myself known; but no—I turned fainter far than he, and staggered away to some steps, on which I sat down to recover myself. By means of a Court Guide, which, by some accident or other, found its way into my hands, I soon afterward found out where he lived. I often went, late at night, when it was dark and wet, so that no one seemed likely to be stirring, and paced to and fro before the large house where he lived, with feelings none can tell. How often has my heart's fluttering half-choked me, while I have listened to the sound of the piano in the drawing-room! No doubt, thought I, his wife is playing to him, and he is leaning on the sofa looking at her fondly! Oh! the hours—the nights I have passed in this wretched way! I thought myself more like a fiend haunting him, than any thing human. And yet, dreadfully as he had injured me, I would have died before I could have annoyed him! And, doctor, I have done the same often towards another house in London. There, also, have I paced for hours, bitter hours—and that house was *yours*!” She burst into tears, and was several minutes before she could resume her narrative. I suggested that I would hear her proceed with her history at some future day—but she told me it was now nearly over. At length she resumed.

“I once walked several streets after you and Mrs. —, and felt as if I could have kissed the ground you walked on. I dared not draw near, lest I should pollute you—lest I might, horrid creature, be seen and recognised; and when I lost sight of you I had nothing for it but to hurry home, and drown my agony in drink. Did you never hear of my elopement, doctor, before now?” she inquired abruptly. I answered that I had not; that, as the air did not suit my wife, we never went again to —; and that after

she and Miss Edwards had ceased corresponding, the pressure of domestic and professional engagements prevented our inquiring after her. She sighed, and proceeded.

"I have often seen in places of amusement, and in the streets, some of the persons to whom Captain —— introduced me in France, but they either could not or would not recognise me—and I never attempted to remind them of me. At length, however, even liquor was insufficient to keep up my spirits. I wandered about the streets—I herded with the horrible wretches about me—as if I was only half aware of what I did and where I was. I would have lived alone—but I dared not! The most dreadful thoughts assailed me. The guilt of my past life would often gleam back upon me in a way that almost drove me mad, and I have waked a whole house with my moanings! To occupy my thoughts, when obliged to be alone, I used to send for the papers, in one of which, while carelessly casting my eyes over the list of deaths, I saw the name of my cousin, by which I knew at once that I was entitled, as I told you before, to the sum of 3000*l*. I instantly determined never to touch it—never to apply for it. I felt I had no business with it; that the dead would shake in their graves if I stretched out my hand towards it. Once I saw my name at the head of an advertisement, stating that by applying somewhere or other, I should hear of something to my advantage! I had resolved in my own mind to leave the whole, when I died, to a particular charity, on condition that they would not allow my name to be known. You can guess the charity I mean, doctor!" She paused as if waiting for an answer.

"The Magdalen Hospital," said I, in a low tone.

"Yes," she replied with a sigh. "But to return, doctor, let me now tell you of a dreadful circumstance, marking indeed the hand of Providence, which occurred only about six months before the period

when you first saw me at —— court. As I was walking about five o'clock in the afternoon, in Oxford-street, miserable as I always was, both at home and abroad, I heard a sudden shout of alarm in the street; and on turning round, saw every thing clearing hastily out of the way of a horse galloping along like lightning towards where I stood, its rider evidently almost falling from his seat. As I stood near one of the cross-streets, the horse suddenly shot past me, round the corner, and, frightful to tell, in the act of turning round, swift as light, being I suppose, startled by some object or other, threw its unfortunate rider over its head with stunning force against a high iron pump, and galloped off faster than before. A crowd of course collected instantly about the sufferer; and I could not help joining it, to find out whether or not the gentleman was killed. The crowd opened suddenly in the direction where I stood, making way for two men who were carrying their stunned and bleeding burden to a doctor's shop close by. He was quite motionless, and the blood pouring from his head. The sight made me, you may suppose, sick and faint, but——" She paused—"Doctor," she continued with a gasp, her face blanching with the recollection, "a glance at the countenance, half covered with blood though it was, showed me the features of Captain ——!" Here Miss Edwards again became exceedingly agitated, trembling from head to foot, and continuing deadly pale. I also felt deeply shocked at the incident she had been telling. At length, in a broken and rather indistinct tone, she proceeded, "I shrieked at the spectacle and swooned, and was helped by some bystanders to an adjoining shop, which it was nearly an hour before I could leave, in a hackney-coach, for my lodgings. I never recovered the shock of that terrible occurrence. The next day's newspaper, which you may believe I bought with sickening apprehension, announced that Captain —— had been killed on the spot, and that

his heart-broken widow was within only a few days of her confinement.

"The moment I recognised the bleeding body, as I have told you, a strange pain shot across my breast. I felt—I knew it was my death-stroke—I knew I had not long to live—that the destroyer and his victim would soon be once more within the dreadful sight of each other! My health and spirits—if it is not a mockery to call them such, soon broke down altogether; every night was I scared with the spectre of Captain —, every day tortured with the recollections of his bleeding corpse, and the horrid associations of my past and present guilt!—Unable to follow my foul, revolting line of life as before, I wandered, like a cursed spirit, from one house of infamy to another, each worse than the former—frequently beaten with cruel violence, half-starved, and sometimes kicked out of doors into the street, because I would not *work*! Twice have I been dragged disgracefully before a magistrate, on false accusations of robbing the vile wretch that owned the house in which I lived! I have lodged in places that were filthier than hog-sties; I have heard robberies planned—and have listened with silent horror to schemes for entrapping the innocent of both sexes to their destruction. Once—once only I dared a whisper of remonstrance—and it earned me a blow from the old Jewess with whom I lived, that stretched me senseless on the floor, amid the laughter and derision of the wretches around us. Pressed by horrid want, I have plied the detestable trade I exercised—and been compelled to smile and caress those who chose to call for me—to drink with them—at the moment when my heart was dying within me! when I felt that consumption was working deeper and deeper into my vitals!

"About three weeks before you saw me, I happened to be prowling about the streets, when my haggard appearance struck a gentleman who was

passing by on horseback. He eyed me earnestly for some moments, and then suddenly dismounted, and gave his horse into the hands of his servant. He had recognised me—spite of the dreadful alteration in my appearance—told me he had known me in what he called, alas! ‘my earlier and better days’—and I recognised in him the nobleman for whose company I had quitted Captain ——! He could hardly speak for the shock he felt. At length he uttered a word or two of commiseration—and taking out a bank-note from his pocket-book, which I afterward found was for twenty pounds—he gave it me, telling me to look after my health—and, a little agitated, I thought, left me, as if ashamed to be seen for an instant speaking with such a wretched object as myself!—I, who had 3000*l.* and more at my command, accepted the charity, the bitter charity of this gentleman, with sullen composure—or resignation—as I thought; fancying that by so doing I was, in a manner, atoning for the enormity of my crimes. At the moments of my uttermost need, when fainting beneath the agonies of starvation—I felt a savage pleasure in thinking how much money I had within my reach, and yet refused to touch!—Guilty—ignorant creature—as if this could be viewed with satisfaction by Him—Him whom I had most offended! With the help of this 20*l.*, which I was afraid to trust myself with in the house where I then resided, for fear of being robbed—perhaps murdered by those about me, I went over to a distant part of the town, and took up my residence—I forget how—in the filthy place from which you rescued me. I had not been there a week when I took to my bed, finding it impossible to drag my aching—my trembling limbs more than a few steps at a time. I felt that death had at last got his cold arms completely around me; and, partly in despair—partly under an influence I knew not how to resist—kind, inestimable doctor, I sent off the line which brought you like an angel of mercy to

my bedside! My life at that place, though for so short a period, was a perpetual hell—worse, I found—far worse than any I had before known.

“Why did not I, you may ask, with the 20*l*. I have been speaking of, seek out a decent and virtuous place of residence? I can only answer—ask the devil—the devil that never once left me! Guilty myself, I went naturally to the scenes of guilt: I could not—I dared not go to any other!—And suppose I had taken lodgings at a place of good character—that such people would have received a wretch such as I too plainly appeared—what was I to do when the 20*l*. was gone?—No—I preferred keeping in the black waters of pollution, till they closed over me! But I was saying how dreadfully I was treated in the last house to which I removed, and where you found me. When too late, I discovered that it was a noted house of call for—thieves, in addition to its other horrors; and the scenes I was compelled to witness I cannot attempt to describe! Would you believe it, doctor?—one morning, the woman who called at your house actually struck me upon the mouth, till the blood gushed out, because I told her I was too ill to get out of bed and accompany the rest of her wretched flock to some place of low entertainment! I submitted to it all, however, as to purgatory—thinking I might as well die there as anywhere else! Believe me, doctor—in my ignorance, my blindness to the horrors of hereafter—I looked on death, and longed for it—as a worn-out traveller looks out for the place of his evening’s rest! I expected to find in the grave the peace, the quiet, the forgetfulness which the world denied me: and as for any thing *beyond*, my mind had grown unable to comprehend the thoughts of it—to understand any thing about it. But from this long and dismal dream—this trance of guilt and horror—the providence of God—”

Miss Edwards here paused, and languidly drew her handkerchief over her face, which showed me,

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alas, by its colour and expression, how much she was exhausted. While I was speaking to her, in as kind a tone of sympathy as my emotion would admit of—for I need hardly say how I felt overcome with her long and melancholy narrative—she fainted. Though I used every known means, on the impulse of the moment, to recall her to consciousness, they seemed of no avail: and, greatly alarmed, I summoned in the nurse and the apothecary. As the latter entered, however, she slowly opened her eyes, and a sigh evidenced the return of consciousness. I continued by her side for nearly an hour longer, speaking all the soothing things my heart could devise—imploping her not to harrow herself with useless recollections of the past.

“But—what a wretch—what a monster must you think me, doctor?” she exclaimed, faintly, averting her face. “Is not the air I breathe, pollution?”

“Eleanor, Eleanor! The Redeemer of the world said not so to the trembling one that washed his feet with her tears.” The poor girl, overpowered with the recollection, sobbed hysterically several times, and clasped her hands in an ecstasy of emotion—murmuring, but so indistinctly I could scarce catch the words—“He said—go in peace!”

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“That blessed history,” she continued, when a little recovered, “is all that makes life tolerable to me. I cling to it, as an earnest of the pardon of Heaven! Oh, it was written for me—for the guilty such as me—I feel, I *know* it was! Oh! world, cruel world—I can bear your scorn! I can bear the finger of contempt pointed at me! I can submit to hear you curse me—I turn from you my eyes—I look to Him, I listen only to Him that looked on Mary, and forgave her!”

“Well, Eleanor, such thoughts as these are sent to you from heaven! He you speak of has heard, and answered you!—But I must not stay here. I

see your feelings are too much excited : they will injure you. You must be got into bed immediately—and, if you wish it, the chaplain shall read a prayer beside you ! Farewell, Eleanor, till to-morrow ! May your thoughts this night be of happier hue ! Sleep—sleep easier, breathe freely, now that so black a burden has been removed from your feelings !”

She uttered not a word, but grasped my hand with affectionate energy, and kissed it. I returned home, filled with mournful recollections of the sad story I had heard, and humble hopes that the mercy of Heaven might yet beam brightly upon the short period that was allotted her upon the earth ! The next day, as indeed I anticipated, I found Miss Edwards in a very low, depressed frame of mind, suffering the reaction consequent upon excitement. Poor girl, she would not be persuaded but that I only forced myself to see her, from a sense of duty ; that her touch, her presence, was intolerable ; that what I had listened to of her confession had made me despise her.

“ Oh !” she exclaimed, with bitter emotion, “ how I abhor and hate myself for having told you so much ; for having so driven from me my only friend !” Not all my most solemn assurances availed to convince her how deeply she was mistaken. She shook her head, and wrung her hands in silent wretchedness. She even despaired of the mercy of Heaven. All this, however, I saw was only a temporary mood of feeling, which I hoped would shortly disappear. She would not allow me, but with difficulty, to shake hands with her on leaving. Her whole frame shrank from me as she exclaimed, “ Oh, touch me not !” To my great regret and even astonishment, she continued in this melancholy humour for a whole week, till I accused myself of imprudence and cruelty in suffering her to tell me her history. My wife, on her return to London, called upon her ; and her cordiality and affection a little reassured the sorrow-smitten



sufferer, and had far more effect than all the medicine of the dispensary and the physicians there could do for her.

We supplied her, at her own earnest wish, with a little employment, to divert her mind from preying upon her already lacerated feelings. She worked at small articles of sewing, embroidery, &c. &c., which were afterward taken, at her desire, to a charitable bazaar in the neighbourhood. The interest taken in her case by the other medical attendants at the dispensary was almost as great as that I felt myself. All that our united experience could suggest was anxiously done for her. Every symptom of danger was anxiously waited for, watched, and, with the blessing of Providence, expelled. All the nourishment she was capable of receiving was given her in the most inviting frame. My wife, the chaplain, myself, and the resident apothecary were frequent visitors, for the purpose of keeping her spirits in cheerful and various exercise; and, with the aid of Heaven, these combined efforts proved eminently successful. I have very rarely, in the case of consumption, known a patient recover from such a hopeless degree of bodily and mental prostration so satisfactorily as Miss Edwards. Her whole nature, indeed, seemed changed; her gentle, cheerful, graceful piety—if I may be allowed the expression—made piety lovely indeed. Not that she gave way to what is too often found to be the exacerbations arising from mere superstition acting upon weakened powers; that she affected what she did not feel, and uttered the sickening language of cant or hypocrisy. There was a lowliness, a simplicity, a fervour, a resignation about her, that could spring from sincerity alone.

The chaplain had given her a copy of the incomparable—the almost divine “Saints’ Rest” of Baxter. Morning, noon and night, did she ponder over its pages, imbibing their chastening, hallowing, glorifying spirit; and would often lay down the book in a

kind of transport, her features glowing with an expression that rivalled my recollections of her former beauty. \* \*

She was soon able to bear the motion of a hackney-coach, and, attended by her faithful nurse, took several drives about the airiest parts of the suburbs. In short, her recovery was marked by the most gratifying signs of permanency. How my heart leaped with joy, after so long, painful, and anxious, often hopeless, an attendance on her, to enter her neatly arranged room, and see her, not stretched upon the bed of agony and death—not turning her pale face to the wall, her soul filled with frightful apprehensions of an infinitely more frightful hereafter, but sitting “clothed, and in her right mind,” reading, beside the window, or walking to and fro, supported by the nurse, her figure, elegant and beautifully moulded, yet painfully slender, habited in a neat dark dress; for “white” she said with a sigh, “she was now unworthy to wear,”—white—the vesture of the innocent! With what honest pride, too, did the nurse look at her—her affectionate heart overjoyed at witnessing a recovery her own unwearied attentions had so materially conducted to ensure!

Finding Miss Edwards’s convalescence so encouraging and steady, I proposed to her, seriously, to make claim, through a respectable solicitor, to the property she was entitled to, and employ a part of it in engaging a small cottage, a few miles from town, before the beautiful summer-weather passed away. I suggested my advertising in the newspapers for such a place as we wanted, to be engaged from year to year, ready furnished; adding, that at a very trifling cost, the nurse could be prevailed on to accompany and attend upon her.

“Come, Eleanor, now, what possible rational objection can you have to all this?” I inquired, finding she listened to my proposal in seriousness and silence.

"Only," she replied, with a sad, sweet smile, "only that it would make me too—too happy!" Matters were soon arranged. A respectable solicitor was duly instructed to put her in the proper way of obtaining what was due to her. There was little difficulty in doing so. The solicitor of her uncle, when written to, came up to town, acknowledged her right, and recognised her in a moment, though he had delicacy enough to abstain from any appearance of surprise, or unnecessary inquiry. There was, consequently, no obstacle on the score of identity; and the property was at once conveyed to her, absolutely. I inserted in the newspapers such an advertisement as I spoke of, and it was answered the next day by the proprietor of precisely such a place as I wanted, which, therefore, I at once engaged, on Miss Edwards's behalf, for a year, and made arrangements for her immediate removal thither. Before quitting the Infirmary, unknown to me, the grateful girl slipped a 50*l.* note—much more than she could afford with comfort—into the poor-box of the institution; and no remonstrance of mine could make her recall it.

I shall not soon forget the day selected for removing Miss Edwards from the infirmary; and I cannot help telling it a little particularly. We had a large glass coach at the dispensary door by eleven o'clock, in which were my wife, and two of my eldest children, to whom I had granted a holyday, for the purpose of accompanying us in this happy little journey—so different, thank God, from a former one! Miss Edwards, with her nurse, filled up the inside, and I rode upon the coach-box. Oh, that happy—that bright, beautiful morning! That moral harvest-home! Never did I feel the sun shine so blessedly, the summer-breeze richer, or the country more charming. Again I say—that happy morning! Heaven! then indeed was thy smile upon us, shedding into all our hearts peace and gladness! That five

miles' drive was such a one as I may never have again—

*"When the freshness of heart and of feeling were mine,  
As they never again may be!"*

I wonder what the coachman must have thought of me! for I could scarcely check the exuberant spirits which animated me.

As for Miss Edwards, I learned from my wife that she spoke but little all the way. Her feelings could scarce content themselves with the silent tears which perpetually forced themselves into her eyes—the tears of ecstasy. When my wife spoke to her, she often could not answer her.

The cottage was very small, but sweetly situated, at some little distance from the high-road. Its little white walls peeped from amid honey-suckle and jessamine, like a half-hid pearl glistening between the folds of green velvet. As my two children trotted on before us with the basket of provisions, and my wife and I followed, with Miss Edwards between us, and the nurse behind, I felt that I was living months of happiness in a few moments of time. My good wife, seeing the difficulty with which Miss Edwards restrained her feelings, woman-like, began to help her fortitude by bursting into tears, and kissing her. This quite overcame the poor girl. As we neared the cottage, she grew paler and paler—leaned more and more upon our arms—and, as we entered the parlour-door, fainted. She soon recovered, however, and gently disengaging herself from my wife and the nurse, sank upon her knees, elevated her trembling hands towards heaven, looked steadfastly upward, in a silence we all felt too sacred to disturb; and the tears, at length flowing freely, relieved a heart overcharged and breaking with gratitude. That was a solemn—a blessed moment; and I am not ashamed to acknowledge, that I felt so overpowered myself with my feelings, that I was compelled to quit the

little room abruptly, and recover myself presently in the garden.

Sneer, ye ignorant of the human heart! Laugh, ye who have never known the luxury of being an instrument chosen by Heaven to assist in relieving the wretched, and bringing back the contrite mourner to peace and happiness; smile, ye whose hearts are impervious to the smiles of an approving Providence; sneer, I say—smile, laugh on—but away from such a scene as this! The ground is holy—oh, profane it not!

My heart is so full with recollections of that happy day, that I could spend pages over it; but I leave the few touches I have given as they are. I add not a stroke to the little picture I have here sketched, in all the humility of conscious imperfection.

We did not quit till about eight o'clock in the evening. Miss Edwards lay on the sofa as we took leave of her, exhausted with the fatigue and excitement of the day.

“Doctor, if you should ever write to me,” whispered the poor girl, as I held her hands in mine, “call this—*Magdalen Cottage!*”

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We paid her frequent visits in her new residence, and I found her, on each occasion, verifying our most anxious hopes of her permanent recovery. The mild summer—the sweet country air—a mind more at ease, and supported by the consolations of religion—did wonders for her. It was refreshing to one's feelings to be with her! She got worshipped by the few poor in her immediate neighbourhood—for whom she was daily engaged in little offices of unassuming charity—and who spoke of her always as “the good lady at the cottage.” She was always dressed in a simple species of half-mourning; and her pale and interesting features looked more so, by contrast with the dark bonnet and vail she wore. I understand that she passed for a widow among the

poor, and others that concerned themselves with inquiring after her; and the nurse—now rather her servant—kept up the notion.

I do not wish to represent Miss Edwards as being always, as it were, on the stilts of sentiment, or perpetually in ecstasies—no such thing. She was placid, peaceful, humble, contented, pious; and all this is consistent with a pervading tone of subdued pensiveness, or even occasional sadness. Heart's ease, sweet flower! is not less heart's ease because it may occasionally bloom in the shade!

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Three years, nearly, did Miss Edwards reside at Magdalen Cottage, as she touchingly styled it; her health, though extremely delicate, was on the whole satisfactory. The nurse was a perfect treasure to her. I was almost tired of expressing to her my approbation and thanks. In the beginning of the second winter, however, I regretted deeply to hear from her, that Miss Edwards, in coming from evening service at the church, about a mile off, to which, though the weather was most inclement, she had imprudently ventured—caught a severe cold, which soon revived several slumbering and startling symptoms. She had received, in short, her death-blow. Alas! alas! how soon I began to hear of profuse night-sweats—of destructive coughing—and all the other fearful train of consumptive symptoms! Her appearance, too, soon began to tell of the havoc that disease was making with her constitution—already too much shattered to resist even the slightest attacks! I cannot pain the reader with dwelling on the early progress of her last symptoms. She soon left off her daily walks to the poor, and very soon took to her bed. Disease did indeed stride apace; and by the malignant intensity of suffering he inflicted, seemed revenging himself for his former defeat! The victim was indeed smitten; but it lay calmly awaiting the stroke of dismissal. She

bore her last affliction with extraordinary meekness and fortitude. I thought she was really—unaffectedly rejoiced at the prospect of her removal. The poor nurse was infinitely the more distressed of the two: and the most serious reproofs I found necessary to check the violence of her feelings. I must now, however, content myself with a few hasty entries from my Diary.

*Wednesday, January 18th.*—I called on Miss Edwards about four o'clock in the afternoon, and found from the nurse that she was sitting up in bed, hearing three little girls, daughters of a neighbouring peasant, their catechism. I was remonstrating in the parlour with the nurse for permitting Miss Edwards to act so imprudently, when a little girl came clattering hastily down stairs into the room, with a frightened air, saying, "Come! come!" I hastened up, and found that the poor girl had fainted in the midst of her pious task; and the two terror-struck children were standing by in silence, with their hands behind them, staring at the ghastly paleness and motionlessness of their preceptress. The book had fallen from her hands, and lay beside her on the bed. I sent the children away immediately, and addressed myself to my sweet, suffering, but imprudent patient. When I had succeeded in recovering her from her swoon, the first words she uttered were, in a faint tone, "Go on, love."—"My dear Eleanor—Eleanor!—It's I,—Doctor —," said I, gently.

"Well, then, *you* must try it, Mary," she continued after a pause, in the same soft tone. "Poor lady! she thinks she's got the children—she's not sensible," whispered the nurse, in tears. What a lovely expression was there in Miss Edwards's face, blanched and wasted though it was!

"I'm afraid, my dear," she commenced again—her head still running on the pious duty from which she had been surprised by her swoon—"I'm afraid you're

been playing, instead—"Come, Eleanor," said I gently.

"No, love, I'm better, now! Go on—that's a good girl!" My vinaigrette served at length to dispel the illusion. With a faint start she recovered herself.

"Oh! Doctor ——! How are you? But," she added, after a pause, "where are the children?"

"They are gone, Eleanor! Really, really, my dear, you must not do so again! It is much more than your strength can bear! Forgive me, Eleanor, but I have forbid them to come again," said I, kindly, not peremptorily. She looked at me with a little surprise, and in silence.

"Poor things!" she at length exclaimed; "how little they thought it was the last time!"

The tears came into her eyes.

"Nurse," said she softly, "please, did you give them the little cakes I told you of?"

The poor woman shook her head in silence.

\* \* \* \* \*

"How do you feel to-day, Eleanor?" I inquired, feeling her pulse.

"Very, very weak; but so happy! I am sorry I heard the children, if you thought I did wrong—but—" her face brightened—"He that loved little children seemed with me!"

"My dear Eleanor, I don't wish to hurt your feelings, but you miscalculate your strength! Indeed, indeed, you don't know how weak you are! Now promise me not to do so again!"

"I will, dear doctor, I will! For my flesh is weak! But how is Mrs. ——?" (my wife.)

"She is well, and begs her love to you. I have brought with me some calves'-foot jelly; she made it herself for you, and hopes you will relish it."

"She's very good to me—very," sobbed the poor girl. "I'll try to take a little this evening. But—I



shall not want it long, doctor," she added, with a sad smile; "I am going, I hope—to heaven!"

She paused. I spoke not.

"If," she resumed, "such a poor guilty thing as I shall be permitted to do so—dear doctor—I will—I will always watch over you and your—"

Her emotions were becoming too violent, and I thought it best to take my leave, promising to be with her the next day. Alas, I saw her sweet sad spirit was not long to be excluded from that blessed place "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest!" Indeed it was hard to part with her!

*January 19th to the 24th, inclusive.*

During this interval Miss Edwards declined rapidly; but her sufferings never once seemed to shake her firm confidence in the mercy of God. She was occasionally elevated, partly through hysteric excitement, to a pitch of inspiration; and uttered such eloquence as I have seldom heard from female lips. The clergyman of the parish administered the sacrament to her once or twice, and it was consolatory, he said, to see the spirit in which she received it.

On one day during this interval, my wife (herself indisposed) accompanied me to Miss Edwards's bedside; and the poor, fond, grateful girl's feelings got quite uncontrollable. I was obliged to remove my wife, almost fainting, from the room; and I fear the shock of that interview—which I afterward blamed myself much for allowing—hurried Miss Edwards more rapidly to her end. On one of the days in question, she calmly arranged about the disposal of her little property; leaving the interest of 1000*l.* to the nurse for her life; 200*l.* to the poor of the parish; a trifle to me and my wife, "for rings—if they will wear them;" and the rest to the Magdalen Hospital, on condition that it was given anonymously, and no attempt made to discover from what quarter it pro-

ceeded beyond me. I put the whole into the hands of my solicitor, and he got her will duly drawn and executed.

*Wednesday, January 25th.*—Miss Edwards was sweetly calm and composed on this visit. She spoke to me of her funeral, begging it might be in the simplest way possible—followed by the nurse, three poor women, to whom she bequeathed black dresses for that purpose—and, if “I would honour her poor unworthy dust,” by myself; that there should be no name, no plate upon the coffin-lid, and no grave-stone in the churchyard. She repeatedly and solemnly enjoined me to observe her wishes in this respect.

“Let me not leave my stained name behind me! No one would feel pleasure in seeing it—but, I believe—I humbly hope, it is written in the Books of Forgiveness above! Let me go gently, and in silence, into my mother Earth, and be thankful for so peaceful a resting-place!” The tone in which she uttered this echoes yet in my ear.

“I am happy, Eleanor,” said I, much affected—“I am *very* happy to see you so composed in the prospect of death! Rely upon it, Heaven is very near you.”

“Yes—the Friend of publicans and sinners—I think He will not refuse to receive me!” she replied, the tears dropping from her eyes.

“How bright—how clear is all before you!”

In a solemn, slow whisper, she looked upwards with an air of awful confidence in the truth of what she was saying, and quoted the sublime language of Scripture. “‘I know that my Redeemer liveth—and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God!’”

“Amen, Eleanor!” I exclaimed, taking her hand in mine—“we may meet again, my love,” said I, but paused abruptly. I felt choked.

“Oh, doctor, yes!” she replied with thrilling em-

phasia, gently compressing my hand. "You must not, doctor, when I am gone, quite forget me! Sometimes, doctor, think of the poor girl you saved from ruin—and believe she loved you!" Our tears fell fast. I could not open my lips. "I know I am not worthy to be in your thoughts—but, dear doctor! *you* will be among the last thoughts in my heart! Will you—kiss me, and promise that you will sometimes remember poor Eleanor?"

Almost blinded by my tears—unable to utter a word—I bent over her and kissed her. "God bless thee, Eleanor," I faltered. She spoke not, but shook her head with unutterable emotion. I could bear it no longer; so I told her that she should see me again in a very few hours—kissed her with a second solemn—it might be final kiss, and left the room. I had rode half-way home before I could at all recover my self-possession. Every time that the pale image of Eleanor B—— came before me it forced the tears afresh into my eyes, and half-determined me to return instantly to her bedside, and continue there till she died.

*Thursday, January 26th.*—As I hurried up, about twelve o'clock, to the cottage, I saw an elderly woman, a stranger, in the act of closing the parlour-shutters. Then my sweet patient was gone! I stepped into the parlour.

"She is dead, I suppose?" I inquired with a faltering voice.

"Ah, poor, good lady, she is gone! She's hardly been dead five minutes, though! Poor nurse is in a sad way about it."

At that moment the nurse came down stairs, wringing her hands and crying bitterly. "Oh—I wish I had died with her! Poor Miss Eleanor—I have lost you! I shall never—" and she cried as though her heart were breaking.

"I hope she died easily?" I inquired, when she had grown calmer.

"Yes—yes, sir! She had been going fast ever since you left yesterday, though she tried, poor, dear thing! to do something for you which she had long been about—and—she died with it in her hands!"

Without uttering a word more, I went up into the bedroom. I cannot describe the peculiar feelings of awe with which I am struck on seeing a very recent corpse—before it has been touched—before any thing has been stirred or altered in the room about it. How forcibly I felt them on the present occasion!

"Did she say any thing before she died?" I inquired of the nurse, as we stood watching the remains.

"She sighed—and said softly—'Kiss me, nurse! —I'm leaving you!'—and died in a few minutes after, as if she was falling asleep!" replied the nurse.

She lay on her left side, her black hair half-concealing her face; and in her hand was a sampler, which she had been working at, I found, frequently during her illness, with a view of having it given to me after her death—and which was not yet finished. I gently disengaged it from her insensible grasp—and let the reader imagine my feelings, on seeing nothing but the letters—

"MARY MAGDALEN—  
E——"

The other letter of her initials,—“B.”—the finger of death had prevented her adding.

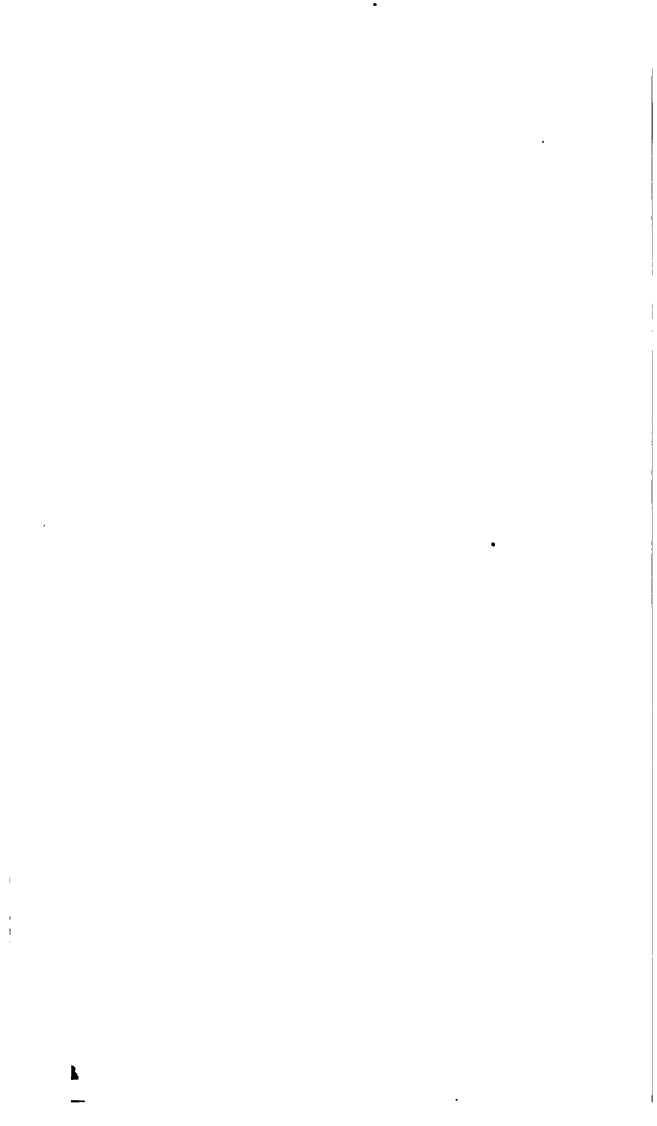
I shall never part with that sampler till I die!—Oh, poor Mary Magdalen!—I will not forget thee!

THE END.

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